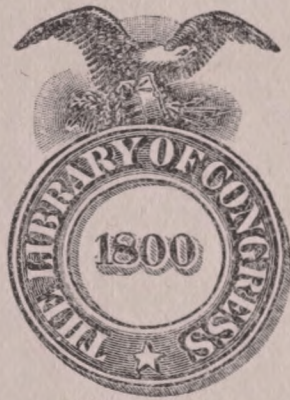




· MORE ·
MYSTERY TALES
FOR BOYS
AND GIRLS
ELVA S. SMITH



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**MORE MYSTERY TALES
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS**

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Girls

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CHRISTMAS IN LEGEND AND STORY



“IS THIS THY WORK?” — *Page 262.*

MORE MYSTERY TALES

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

SELECTED BY
ELVA S. SMITH

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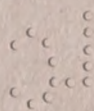
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MORE MYSTERY TALES
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Printed in U. S. A.

Norwood Press
BERWICK & SMITH CO.
NORWOOD, MASS.

DEC 12 1922



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no 1.

PREFACE

MANY years ago, amid the arid wastes of a New England Sunday School library, I once chanced upon an oasis—George MacDonald's "Warlock o' Glenwarlock." In spite of its more than seven hundred pages and its difficult Scotch dialect, I returned to it again and again; but the lodestone of attraction was not, I fear, the fine and unworldly characters of the old laird and his son, or the descriptions of Old World life and scenery; still less the sermons, though these were excellent, or the good advice, which the author so liberally bestowed upon the reader. It was rather the lure of the haunted chamber, the ghostly appearances of the auld captain, commonly reputed a pirate, the slow unraveling of the mystery, and the final discovery of the treasure, the wonderful, glowing mass of jewels, so artfully hidden away. A glance through the pages of the book still brings back the breathless thrill of yore, when the opening up of the secret cavity in the wall revealed the toy horse in his prison stall. Cosmo had at last caught his "naig"; he had but to

“pu’ his tail;
In his hin’ heel ca’ a nail;
Rug his lugs frae ane anither—
Stan’ up, an’ ca’ the king [his] brither.”

“A good, clean story,” some one has penciled in a library copy; but it is little known now, and most boys and girls, with scores of attractive and beautifully illustrated books from which to choose, would probably look somewhat askance at its plain cover, closely printed pages, and old-fashioned pictures. The author himself characterized “Warlock o’ Glenwarlock” as “homely,” but it had the qualities which irresistibly attracted the young people of the eighties and nineties—the elements of mystery and romance, the background of the unknown, the suggestion of the supernatural—and these qualities are equally fascinating to the boys and girls of to-day. “Please give me a good mystery tale” is one of the most frequent requests in library children’s rooms. Literary fashions, or methods, may have changed somewhat in the intervening years; but still

“It is very good indeed,
When the nights are dark and cold,
Near the friendly hearth to read,
Tales of ghosts and buried gold.”

It is to meet this need that some of the best short stories and story-poems have been brought together in this book and its companion volume, "Mystery Tales for Boys and Girls." As in the earlier collection, the selections are chiefly legendary in character; but they are varied in setting and incident, and cover a wide range of time from the days of the Emperor Maximus to the Great War of the twentieth century. Though the plot interest of longer narratives is wanting, herein will be found mystic talismans, spectral lights, phantom ships, warlocks and witches, ghosts and wizards, hidden treasure, and strange enchantments. The stories and poems are not limited in their interest to any particular period; they may be enjoyed throughout the year; but they are especially appropriate for use at the Hallowe'en season and will help to meet the increased demand for mystery tales at this time. Many of them, it is hoped, will suggest other reading, or lead to the original volumes from which these selections have been taken. "Redgauntlet," the source of "Wandering Willie's tale," tells, for instance, the interesting story of a Jacobite conspiracy; Irving's "Alhambra" is a mine of fascinating Moorish tales; the Welsh legend of Maxen Wledig, only a part of which is included here, is from "The Mabinogion," translated by Lady

Charlotte Guest. "The Abbaye de Cérisy," taken from "Studies and Stories," by Mrs. Molesworth, naturally suggests the history and fiction of the French Revolution. For more ghost stories, one should read the tale of the murdered king of Denmark, young Hamlet's father, and the story of Macbeth who met the weird sisters on the blasted heath and saw in a vision the "blood-bolter'd Banquo."

"The Mystery of Old Daddy's Window" from "The Young Mountaineers," by Charles Egbert Craddock; "Howe's Masquerade" from "Twice-Told Tales," by Nathaniel Hawthorne; "A Greyport Legend," by Bret Harte; "Friar Bacon's Brazen Head" from "Stories from Old English History," by Abby Sage Richardson; "The Mystery of Cro-a-tàn" from "Colonial Ballads, Sonnets, and Other Verses," by Margaret J. Preston; and "The Dead Ship of Harpswell," by John Greenleaf Whittier, are used by permission of and by special arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers. "The Three Low Masses" from "Little French Masterpieces: Alphonse Daudet," the translation by George Burnham Ives; and "The Bowmen" from "The Bowmen, and Other Legends of the War," by Arthur Machen, are included through the courtesy

of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London. The inclusion of "Cap'n Goldsack," by William Sharp, is through the permission of Harper & Brothers and Mrs. William Sharp. "The Highwayman," by Alfred Noyes, is reprinted by special arrangement with the Frederick A. Stokes Company.

Thanks are also due to Dr. Arthur Wentworth Hamilton Eaton for permission to reprint "The Phantom Light of the Baie des Chaleurs" from "Acadian Legends and Lyrics"; to the Atlantic Monthly Press for the use of the poem "Ipswich Bar," by Esther and Brainard Bates; and to the Overland Publishing Company for permission to include "Lost in the Fog," by Noah Brooks. "The Roll-Call of the Reef," from "Wandering Heath," by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, and "The Miracle of the White Wolf," from "The White Wolf, and Other Fireside Tales," are used with the permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

Most of the selections have been given without change or adaptation but in a few cases they have been slightly shortened by the omission of an occasional sentence or paragraph not necessary to the understanding of the story.

ELVA S. SMITH.

Pittsburgh, 1922.

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**MORE MYSTERY TALES
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS**

MORE MYSTERY TALES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS



LEGEND OF THE TWO DISCREET STATUES

WASHINGTON IRVING

THERE lived once in a waste apartment of the Alhambra a merry little fellow, named Lope Sanchez, who worked in the gardens, and was as brisk and as blithe as a grasshopper, singing all day

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long. He was the life and soul of the fortress; when his work was over, he would sit on one of the stone benches of the esplanade, strum his guitar, and sing long ditties about the Cid, and Bernardo del Carpio, and Fernando del Pulgar, and other Spanish heroes, for the amusement of the old soldiers of the fortress; or would strike up a merrier tune, and set the girls dancing boleros and fandangos.

Like most little men, Lope Sanchez had a strapping buxom dame for a wife, who could almost have put him in her pocket; but he lacked the usual poor man's lot—instead of ten children he had but one. This was a little black-eyed girl about twelve years of age, named Sanchica, who was as merry as himself, and the delight of his heart. She played about him as he worked in the gardens, danced to his guitar as he sat in the shade, and ran as wild as a young fawn about the groves and alleys and ruined halls of the Alhambra.

It was now the eve of the blessed St. John, and the holiday-loving gossips of the Alhambra, men, women, and children, went up at night to the Mountain of the Sun, which rises above the Generalife, to keep their midsummer vigil on its level summit. It was a bright moonlight night, and all the mountains were gray and silvery, and the city, with its

domes and spires, lay in shadows below, and the Vega was like a fairy-land, with haunted streams gleaming among its dusky groves. On the highest part of the mountain they lit a bonfire, according to an old custom of the country handed down from the Moors. The inhabitants of the surrounding country were keeping a similar vigil, and bonfires, here and there in the Vega, and along the folds of the mountains, blazed up palely in the moonlight.

The evening was gayly passed in dancing to the guitar of Lope Sanchez, who was never so joyous as when on a holiday revel of the kind. While the dance was going on, the little Sanchica with some of her playmates sported among the ruins of an old Moorish fort that crowns the mountain, when, in gathering pebbles in the fosse, she found a small hand curiously carved of jet, the fingers closed, and the thumb firmly clasped upon them. Overjoyed with her good fortune, she ran to her mother with her prize. It immediately became a subject of sage speculation, and was eyed by some with superstitious distrust. "Throw it away," said one; "it's Moorish—depend upon it, there's mischief and witchcraft in it." "By no means," said another; "you may sell it for something to the jewelers of the Zacatin."

In the midst of this discussion an old tawny sol-

dier drew near, who had served in Africa and was as swarthy as a Moor. He examined the hand with a knowing look. "I have seen things of this kind," said he, "among the Moors of Barbary. It is a great virtue to guard against the evil eye, and all kinds of spells and enchantments. I give you joy, friend Lope; this bodes good luck to your child."

Upon hearing this, the wife of Lope Sanchez tied the little hand of jet to a ribbon, and hung it round the neck of her daughter.

The sight of this talisman called up all the favorite superstitions about the Moors. The dance was neglected, and they sat in groups on the ground, telling old legendary tales handed down from their ancestors. Some of their stories turned upon the wonders of the very mountain upon which they were seated, which is a famous hobgoblin region. One ancient crone gave a long account of the subterranean palace in the bowels of that mountain where Boabdil and all his Moslem court are said to remain enchanted.

"Among yonder ruins," said she, pointing to some crumbling walls and mounds of earth on a distant part of the mountain, "there is a deep black pit that goes down, down into the very heart of the mountain. For all the money in Granada I would not look down into it. Once upon a time a poor

man of the Alhambra, who tended goats upon this mountain, scrambled down into that pit after a kid that had fallen in. He came out again all wild and staring, and told such things of what he had seen, that every one thought his brain was turned. He raved for a day or two about the hobgoblin Moors that had pursued him in the cavern, and could hardly be persuaded to drive his goats up again to the mountain. He did so at last, but, poor man, he never came down again. The neighbors found his goats browsing about the Moorish ruins, and his hat and mantle lying near the mouth of the pit, but he was never more heard of."

The little Sanchica listened with breathless attention to this story. She was of a curious nature, and felt immediately a great hankering to peep into this dangerous pit. Stealing away from her companions, she sought the distant ruins, and, after groping for some time among them, came to a small hollow, or basin, near the brow of the mountain, where it swept steeply down into the valley of the Darro. In the centre of this basin yawned the mouth of the pit. Sanchica ventured to the verge and peeped in. All was as black as pitch and gave an idea of immeasurable depth. Her blood ran cold; she drew back, then peeped in again, then would have run away, then took another peep—the

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very horror of the thing was delightful to her. At length she rolled a large stone and pushed it over the brink. For some time it fell in silence; then struck some rocky projection with a violent crash; then rebounded from side to side, rumbling and tumbling, with a noise like thunder; then made a final splash into water, far, far below—and all was again silent.

The silence, however, did not long continue. It seemed as if something had been awakened within this dreary abyss. A murmuring sound gradually rose out of the pit like the hum and buzz of a beehive. It grew louder and louder, there was the confusion of voices as of a distant multitude, together with the faint din of arms, clash of cymbals and clangor of trumpets, as if some army were marshaling for battle in the very bowels of the mountain.

The child drew off with silent awe, and hastened back to the place where she had left her parents and their companions. All were gone. The bonfire was expiring and its last wreath of smoke curling up in the moonshine. The distant fires that had blazed along the mountains and in the Vega were all extinguished and everything seemed to have sunk to repose. Sanchica called her parents and some of her companions by name, but received no

reply. She ran down the side of the mountain, and by the gardens of the Generalife, until she arrived in the alley of trees leading to the Alhambra, when she seated herself on a bench of a woody recess, to recover breath.

The bell from the watch-tower of the Alhambra tolled midnight. There was a deep tranquillity as if all nature slept; excepting the low tinkling sound of an unseen stream that ran under the covert of the bushes. The breathing sweetness of the atmosphere was lulling her to sleep, when her eye was caught by something glittering at a distance, and to her surprise she beheld a long cavalcade of Moorish warriors pouring down the mountain-side and along the leafy avenues. Some were armed with lances and shields; others with cimeters and battle-axes, and with polished cuirasses that flashed in the moonbeams. Their horses pranced proudly and champed upon their bits, but their tramp caused no more sound than if they had been shod with felt, and the riders were all as pale as death. Among them rode a beautiful lady, with a crowned head and long golden locks entwined with pearls. The housings of her palfrey were of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and swept the earth; but she rode all disconsolate, with eyes ever fixed upon the ground.

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Then succeeded a train of courtiers magnificently arrayed in robes and turbans of divers colors, and amidst them, on a cream-colored charger, rode king Boabdil el Chico, in a royal mantle covered with jewels, and a crown sparkling with diamonds. The little Sanchica knew him by his yellow beard and his resemblance to his portrait, which she had often seen in the picture-gallery of the Generalife. She gazed in wonder and admiration at this royal pageant, as it passed glistening among the trees; but though she knew these monarchs and courtiers and warriors, so pale and silent, were out of the common course of nature, and things of magic and enchantment, yet she looked on with a bold heart, such courage did she derive from the mystic talisman of the hand, which was suspended about her neck.

The cavalcade having passed by, she rose and followed. It continued on to the great Gate of Justice, which stood wide open. The old invalid sentinels on duty lay on the stone benches of the barbican, buried in profound and apparently charmed sleep and the phantom pageant swept noiselessly by them with flaunting banner and triumphant state. Sanchica would have followed; but to her surprise she beheld an opening in the earth, within the barbican, leading down beneath the foundations of the tower. She entered for a

little distance and was encouraged to proceed by finding steps rudely hewn in the rock, and a vaulted passage here and there lit up by a silver lamp, which, while it gave light, diffused likewise a grateful fragrance. Venturing on, she came at last to a great hall, wrought out of the heart of the mountain, magnificently furnished in the Moorish style, and lighted up by silver and crystal lamps. Here, on an ottoman, sat an old man in Moorish dress, with a long white beard, nodding and dozing, with a staff in his hand, which seemed ever to be slipping from his grasp; while at a little distance sat a beautiful lady, in ancient Spanish dress, with a coronet all sparkling with diamonds and her hair entwined with pearls, who was softly playing on a silver lyre. The little Sanchica now recollected a story she had heard among the old people of the Alhambra, concerning a Gothic princess confined in the centre of the mountain by an old Arabian magician, whom she kept bound up in magic sleep by the power of music.

The lady paused with surprise at seeing a mortal in that enchanted hall. "Is it the eve of the blessed St. John?" said she.

"It is," replied Sanchica.

"Then for one night the magic charm is suspended. Come hither, child, and fear not. I am a

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Christian like thyself, though bound here by enchantment. Touch my fetters with the talisman that hangs about thy neck and for this night I shall be free."

So saying, she opened her robes and displayed a broad golden band round her waist and a golden chain that fastened her to the ground. The child hesitated not to apply the little hand of jet to the golden band and immediately the chain fell to the earth. At the sound the old man woke and began to rub his eyes; but the lady ran her fingers over the chords of the lyre and again he fell into a slumber and began to nod and his staff to falter in his hand.

"Now," said the lady, "touch his staff with the talismanic hand of jet." The child did so and it fell from his grasp and he sank in a deep sleep on the ottoman. The lady gently laid the silver lyre on the ottoman, leaning it against the head of the sleeping magician; then touching the chords until they vibrated in his ear—"O potent spirit of harmony," said she, "continue thus to hold his senses in thralldom till the return of day. Now follow me, my child," continued she, "and thou shalt behold the Alhambra as it was in the days of its glory, for thou hast a magic talisman that reveals all enchantments."

Sanchica followed the lady in silence. They passed up through the entrance of the cavern into the barbican of the Gate of Justice, and thence to the Plaza de los Algibes, or esplanade within the fortress.

This was all filled with Moorish soldiery, horse and foot, marshaled in squadrons, with banners displayed. There were royal guards also at the portal and rows of African blacks with drawn cimeters. No one spoke a word and Sanchica passed on fearlessly after her conductor. Her astonishment increased on entering the royal palace, in which she had been reared. The broad moonshine lit up all the halls and courts and gardens almost as brightly as if it were day, but revealed a far different scene from that to which she was accustomed. The walls of the apartments were no longer stained and rent by time. Instead of cobwebs, they were now hung with rich silks of Damascus and the gildings and arabesque paintings were restored to their original brilliancy and freshness. The halls, no longer naked and unfurnished, were set out with divans and ottomans of the rarest stuffs, embroidered with pearls and studded with precious gems, and all the fountains in the courts and gardens were playing.

The kitchens were again in full operation; cooks

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were busy preparing shadowy dishes, and roasting and boiling the phantoms of pullets and partridges; servants were hurrying to and fro with silver dishes heaped up with dainties, and arranging a delicious banquet. The Court of Lions was thronged with guards and courtiers and alfaquis, as in the old times of the Moors; and at the upper end, in the saloon of judgment, sat Boabdil on his throne, surrounded by his court, and swaying a shadowy sceptre for the night. Notwithstanding all this throng and seeming bustle, not a voice nor a footstep was to be heard; nothing interrupted the midnight silence but the splashing of the fountains.

The little Sanchica followed her conductress in mute amazement about the palace, until they came to a portal opening to the vaulted passages beneath the great tower of Comares. On each side of the portal sat the figure of a nymph, wrought out of alabaster. Their heads were turned aside and their regards fixed upon the same spot within the vault. The enchanted lady paused and beckoned the child to her. "Here," said she, "is a great secret, which I will reveal to thee in reward for thy faith and courage. These discreet statues watch over a treasure hidden in old times by a Moorish king. Tell thy father to search the spot on which their eyes are fixed and he will find what will make him richer

than any man in Granada. Thy innocent hands alone, however, gifted as thou art also with the talisman, can remove the treasure. Bid thy father use it discreetly, and devote a part of it to the performance of daily masses for my deliverance from this unholy enchantment."

When the lady had spoken these words, she led the child onward to the little garden of Lindaraxa, which is hard by the vault of the statues. The moon trembled upon the waters of the solitary fountain in the centre of the garden and shed a tender light upon the orange and citron trees. The beautiful lady plucked a branch of myrtle and wreathed it round the head of the child. "Let this be a memento," said she, "of what I have revealed to thee, and a testimonial of its truth. My hour is come; I must return to the enchanted hall; follow me not, lest evil befall thee—farewell. Remember what I have said, and have masses performed for my deliverance." So saying, the lady entered a dark passage leading beneath the tower of Comares, and was no longer seen.

The faint crowing of a cock was now heard from the cottages below the Alhambra, in the valley of the Darro, and a pale streak of light began to appear above the eastern mountains. A slight wind arose, there was a sound like the rustling of dry

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leaves through the courts and corridors, and door after door shut to with a jarring sound.

Sanchica returned to the scenes she had so lately beheld thronged with the shadowy multitude, but Boabdil and his phantom court were gone. The moon shone into empty halls and galleries stripped of their transient splendor, stained and dilapidated by time, and hung with cobwebs. The bat flitted about in the uncertain light, and the frog croaked from the fish-pond.

Sanchica now made the best of her way to a remote staircase that led up to the humble apartment occupied by her family. The door as usual was open, for Lope Sanchez was too poor to need bolt or bar; she crept quietly to her pallet, and, putting the myrtle wreath beneath her pillow, soon fell asleep.

In the morning she related all that had befallen her to her father. Lope Sanchez, however, treated the whole as a mere dream and laughed at the child for her credulity. He went forth to his customary labors in the garden, but had not been there long when his little daughter came running to him almost breathless. "Father! father!" cried she, "behold the myrtle wreath which the Moorish lady bound round my head!"

Lope Sanchez gazed with astonishment, for the

stalk of the myrtle was of pure gold, and every leaf was a sparkling emerald! Being not much accustomed to precious stones, he was ignorant of the real value of the wreath, but he saw enough to convince him that it was something more substantial than the stuff of which dreams are generally made, and that at any rate the child had dreamt to some purpose. His first care was to enjoin the most absolute secrecy upon his daughter; in this respect, however, he was secure, for she had discretion far beyond her years or sex. He then repaired to the vault, where stood the statues of the two alabaster nymphs. He remarked that their heads were turned from the portal, and that the regards of each were fixed upon the same point in the interior of the building. Lope Sanchez could not but admire this most discreet contrivance for guarding a secret. He drew a line from the eyes of the statues to the point of regard, made a private mark on the wall, and then retired.

All day, however, the mind of Lope Sanchez was distracted with a thousand cares. He could not help hovering within distant view of the two statues, and became nervous from the dread that the golden secret might be discovered. Every footstep that approached the place made him tremble. He would have given anything could he but have

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turned the heads of the statues, forgetting that they had looked precisely in the same direction for some hundreds of years, without any person being the wiser.

“A plague upon them,” he would say to himself, “they’ll betray all; did ever mortal hear of such a mode of guarding a secret?” Then on hearing any one advance, he would steal off, as though his very lurking near the place would awaken suspicion. Then he would return cautiously, and peep from a distance to see if everything was secure, but the sight of the statues would again call forth his indignation. “Ay, there they stand,” would he say, “always looking, and looking, and looking, just where they should not. Confound them! they are just like all their sex; if they have not tongues to tattle with, they’ll be sure to do it with their eyes.”

At length, to his relief, the long anxious day drew to a close. The sound of footsteps was no longer heard in the echoing halls of the Alhambra; the last stranger passed the threshold, the great portal was barred and bolted, and the bat and the frog and the hooting owl gradually resumed their nightly vocations in the deserted palace.

Lope Sanchez waited, however, until the night was far advanced before he ventured with his little daughter to the hall of the two nymphs. He found

them looking as knowingly and mysteriously as ever at the secret place of deposit. "By your leaves, gentle ladies," thought Lope Sanchez, as he passed between them, "I will relieve you from this charge that must have set so heavy in your minds for the last two or three centuries." He accordingly went to work at the part of the wall which he had marked, and in a little while laid open a concealed recess, in which stood two great jars of porcelain. He attempted to draw them forth, but they were immovable, until touched by the innocent hand of his little daughter. With her aid he dislodged them from their little niche, and found to his great joy that they were filled with pieces of Moorish gold, mingled with jewels and precious stones. Before daylight he managed to convey them to his chamber, and left the two guardian statues with their eyes still fixed on the vacant wall.

Lope Sanchez had thus on a sudden become a rich man; but riches, as usual, brought a world of cares to which he had hitherto been a stranger. How was he to convey away his wealth with safety? How was he even to enter upon the enjoyment of it without awakening suspicion? Now, too, for the first time in his life the dread of robbers entered into his mind. He looked with terror at the insecurity of his habitation, and went to work to barri-

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cade the doors and windows; yet after all his precautions he could not sleep soundly. His usual gaiety was at an end, he had no longer a joke or a song for his neighbors, and, in short, became the most miserable animal in the Alhambra. His old comrades remarked this alteration, pitied him heartily, and began to desert him; thinking he must be falling into want, and in danger of looking to them for assistance. Little did they suspect that his only calamity was riches.

The wife of Lope Sanchez shared his anxiety, but then she had ghostly comfort. We ought before this to have mentioned that Lope, being rather a light inconsiderate little man, his wife was accustomed, in all grave matters, to seek the counsel and ministry of her confessor, Fray Simon, a sturdy, broad-shouldered, blue-bearded, bullet-headed friar of the neighboring convent of San Francisco, who was in fact the spiritual comforter of half the good wives of the neighborhood. He was, moreover, in great esteem among divers sisterhoods of nuns; who requited him for his ghostly services by frequent presents of those little dainties and knickknacks manufactured in convents, such as delicate confectious, sweet biscuits and bottles of spiced cordials, found to be marvelous restoratives after fasts and vigils.

Fray Simon thrived in the exercise of his functions. His oily skin glistened in the sunshine as he toiled up the hill of the Alhambra on a sultry day. Yet notwithstanding his sleek condition, the knotted rope round his waist showed the austerity of his self-discipline; the multitude doffed their caps to him as a mirror of piety, and even the dogs scented the odor of sanctity that exhaled from his garments, and howled from their kennels as he passed.

Such was Fray Simon, the spiritual counselor of the comely wife of Lope Sanchez; and as the father confessor is the domestic confidant of women in humble life in Spain, he was soon acquainted, in great secrecy, with the story of the hidden treasure.

The friar opened his eyes and mouth and crossed himself a dozen times at the news. After a moment's pause, "Daughter of my soul!" said he, "know that thy husband has committed a double sin—a sin against both state and church! The treasure he hath thus seized upon for himself, being found in the royal domains, belongs of course to the crown; but being infidel wealth, rescued as it were from the very fangs of Satan, should be devoted to the church. Still, however, the matter may be accommodated. Bring hither thy myrtle wreath."

When the good father beheld it, his eyes twinkled more than ever with admiration of the size and

beauty of the emeralds. "This," said he, "being the first fruits of this discovery, should be dedicated to pious purposes. I will hang it up as a votive offering before the image of San Francisco in our chapel, and will earnestly pray to him, this very night, that your husband be permitted to remain in quiet possession of your wealth."

The good dame was delighted to make her peace with heaven at so cheap a rate, and the friar, putting the wreath under his mantle, departed with saintly steps toward his convent.

When Lope Sanchez came home, his wife told him what had passed. He was excessively provoked, for he lacked his wife's devotion, and had for some time groaned in secret at the domestic visitations of the friar. "Woman," said he, "what hast thou done? thou hast put everything at hazard by thy tattling."

"What!" cried the good woman, "would you forbid my disburdening my conscience to my confessor?"

"No, wife! confess as many of your own sins as you please; but as to this money-digging, it is a sin of my own, and my conscience is very easy under the weight of it."

There was no use, however, in complaining; the secret was told, and, like water spilled on the sand,

was not again to be gathered. Their only chance was that the friar would be discreet.

The next day, while Lope Sanchez was abroad, there was a humble knocking at the door, and Fray Simon entered with meek and demure countenance.

“Daughter,” said he, “I have earnestly prayed to San Francisco, and he has heard my prayer. In the dead of night the saint appeared to me in a dream, but with a frowning aspect. ‘Why,’ said he, ‘dost thou pray to me to dispense with this treasure of the Gentiles, when thou seest the poverty of my chapel? Go to the house of Lope Sanchez, crave in my name a portion of the Moorish gold, to furnish two candlesticks for the main altar, and let him possess the residue in peace.’”

When the good woman heard of this vision, she crossed herself with awe, and going to the secret place where Lope had hid the treasure, she filled a great leathern purse with pieces of Moorish gold, and gave it to the friar. The pious monk bestowed upon her, in return, benedictions enough, if paid by Heaven, to enrich her race to the latest posterity; then slipping the purse into the sleeve of his habit, he folded his hands upon his breast, and departed with an air of humble thankfulness.

When Lope Sanchez heard of this second donation to the church, he had well-nigh lost his senses.

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“Unfortunate man,” cried he, “what will become of me? I shall be robbed by piecemeal; I shall be ruined and brought to beggary!”

It was with the utmost difficulty that his wife could pacify him, by reminding him of the countless wealth that yet remained, and how considerate it was for San Francisco to rest contented with so small a portion.

Unluckily, Fray Simon had a number of poor relations to be provided for, not to mention some half-dozen sturdy bullet-headed orphan children and destitute foundlings that he had taken under his care. He repeated his visits, therefore, from day to day, with solicitations on behalf of Saint Dominick, Saint Andrew, Saint James, until poor Lope was driven to despair, and found that unless he got out of the reach of this holy friar, he should have to make peace-offerings to every saint in the calendar. He determined, therefore, to pack up his remaining wealth, beat a secret retreat in the night, and make off to another part of the kingdom.

Full of his project, he bought a stout mule for the purpose, and tethered it in a gloomy vault underneath the tower of the seven floors; the very place whence the Belludo, or goblin horse, is said to issue forth at midnight, and scour the streets of Granada, pursued by a pack of hell-hounds. Lope

Sanchez had little faith in the story, but availed himself of the dread occasioned by it, knowing that no one would be likely to pry into the subterranean stable of the phantom steed. He sent off his family in the course of the day, with orders to wait for him at a distant village of the Vega. As the night advanced, he conveyed his treasure to the vault under the tower, and having loaded his mule, he led it forth, and cautiously descended the dusky avenue.

Honest Lope had taken his measures with the utmost secrecy, imparting them to no one but the faithful wife of his bosom. By some miraculous revelation, however, they became known to Fray Simon. The zealous friar beheld these infidel treasures on the point of slipping forever out of his grasp, and determined to have one more dash at them for the benefit of the church and San Francisco. Accordingly, when the bells had rung for animas, and all the Alhambra was quiet, he stole out of his convent, and descending through the Gate of Justice, concealed himself among the thickets of roses and laurels that border the great avenue. Here he remained, counting the quarters of hours as they were sounded on the bell of the watch-tower, and listening to the dreary hootings of owls, and the distant barking of dogs from the gypsy caverns.

At length he heard the tramp of hoofs, and, through the gloom of the overshadowing trees, imperfectly beheld a steed descending the avenue. The sturdy friar chuckled at the idea of the knowing turn he was about to serve honest Lope.

Tucking up the skirts of his habit, and wriggling like a cat watching a mouse, he waited until his prey was directly before him, when darting forth from his leafy covert, and putting one hand on the shoulder and the other on the crupper, he made a vault that would not have disgraced the most experienced master of equitation, and alighted well-forked astride the steed. "Ah ha!" said the sturdy friar, "we shall now see who best understands the game."

He had scarce uttered the words when the mule began to kick, and rear, and plunge, and then set off full speed down the hill. The friar attempted to check him, but in vain. He bounded from rock to rock, and bush to bush; the friar's habit was torn to ribbons and fluttered in the wind, his shaven poll received many a hard knock from the branches of the trees, and many a scratch from the brambles. To add to his terror and distress, he found a pack of seven hounds in full cry at his heels, and perceived, too late, that he was actually mounted upon the terrible Belludo!

Away then they went, according to the ancient phrase, "pull devil, pull friar," down the great avenue, across the Plaza Nueva, along the Zacatin, around the Vivarrambla—never did huntsman and hound make a more furious run, or more infernal uproar. In vain did the friar invoke every saint in the calendar, and the Holy Virgin into the bargain; every time he mentioned a name of the kind it was like a fresh application of the spur, and made the Belludo bound as high as a house. Through the remainder of the night was the unlucky Fray Simon carried hither and thither, and whither he would not, until every bone in his body ached, and he suffered a loss of leather too grievous to be mentioned. At length the crowing of a cock gave the signal of returning day. At the sound the goblin steed wheeled about, and galloped back for his tower. Again he scoured the Vivarrambla, the Zacatin, the Plaza Nueva, and the avenue of fountains, the seven dogs yelling, and barking, and leaping up, and snapping at the heels of the terrified friar. The first streak of day had just appeared as they reached the tower; here the goblin steed kicked up his heels, sent the friar a somersault through the air, plunged into the dark vault followed by the infernal pack, and a profound silence succeeded to the late deafening clamor.

Was ever so diabolical a trick played off upon a holy friar? A peasant going to his labors at early dawn found the unfortunate Fray Simon lying under a fig-tree at the foot of the tower, but so bruised and bedeviled that he could neither speak nor move. He was conveyed with all care and tenderness to his cell, and the story went that he had been waylaid and maltreated by robbers. A day or two elapsed before he recovered the use of his limbs; he consoled himself, in the meantime, with the thoughts that though the mule with the treasure had escaped him, he had previously had some rare pickings at the infidel spoils. His first care on being able to use his limbs was to search beneath his pallet, where he had secreted the myrtle wreath and the leathern pouches of gold extracted from the piety of Dame Sanchez. What was his dismay at finding the wreath, in effect, but a withered branch of myrtle, and the leathern pouches filled with sand and gravel!

Fray Simon, with all his chagrin, had the discretion to hold his tongue, for to betray the secret might draw on him the ridicule of the public, and the punishment of his superior. It was not until many years afterward, on his death-bed, that he revealed to his confessor his nocturnal ride on the Belludo.

Nothing was heard of Lope Sanchez for a long time after his disappearance from the Alhambra. His memory was always cherished as that of a merry companion, though it was feared, from the care and melancholy observed in his conduct shortly before his mysterious departure, that poverty and distress had driven him to some extremity. Some years afterward one of his old companions, an invalid soldier, being at Malaga, was knocked down and nearly run over by a coach and six. The carriage stopped; an old gentleman, magnificently dressed, with a bag-wig and sword, stepped out to assist the poor invalid. What was the astonishment of the latter to behold in this grand cavalier his old friend Lope Sanchez, who was actually celebrating the marriage of his daughter Sanchica with one of the first grandees in the land.

The carriage contained the bridal party. There was Dame Sanchez, now grown as round as a barrel, and dressed out with feathers and jewels, and necklaces of pearls, and necklaces of diamonds, and rings on every finger, altogether a finery of apparel that had not been seen since the days of Queen Sheba. The little Sanchica had now grown to be a woman, and for grace and beauty might have been mistaken for a duchess, if not a princess outright. The bridegroom sat beside her—rather a

withered, spindle-shanked little man, but this only proved him to be of the true-blue blood; a legitimate Spanish grandee being rarely above three cubits in stature. The match had been of the mother's making.

Riches had not spoiled the heart of honest Lope. He kept his old comrade with him for several days; feasted him like a king, took him to plays and bull-fights, and at length sent him away rejoicing, with a big bag of money for himself, and another to be distributed among his ancient messmates of the Alhambra.

Lope always gave out that a rich brother had died in America and left him heir to a copper mine; but the shrewd gossips of the Alhambra insist that his wealth was all derived from his having discovered the secret guarded by the two marble nymphs of the Alhambra. It is remarked that these very discreet statues continue, even unto the present day, with their eyes fixed most significantly on the same part of the wall; which leads many to suppose there is still some hidden treasure remaining there well worthy the attention of the enterprising traveler. Though others, and particularly all female visitors, regard them with great complacency as lasting monuments of the fact that women can keep a secret.



THE CAVERN OF STEENFOLL

A Legend of Scotland

WILHELM HAUFF

ON one of the rocky islands off the coast of Scotland lived many years ago, in the utmost harmony, two fishermen. They were both unmarried, were both without relatives, and supported themselves by their common labor. In age they were nearly equal, but in person and disposition they resembled each other as little as an eagle and a seal.

Donald Douglas was a short, thick-set man, with a broad face and good-humored, laughing eyes, where care and sorrow seemed to be total strangers.

He was sleepy and torpid as well as fat, and on him fell the cares of the household, cooking and baking, making nets for catching fish, and a large share of the cultivation of the little field around the cottage.

His companion was diametrically his opposite; tall and spare, with the eyes of a hawk, and a high, arched nose. He was known as the most energetic and successful fisherman, the most daring climber for birds, the busiest farmer, and the shrewdest merchant in Kirkwall; but, as his wares were good and his dealings rigidly honest, every one was ready to trade with him, and William Falke—so the country people called him—and his friend Donald Douglas, with whom the former, notwithstanding his avarice, ungrudgingly divided his hard-earned gains, made not only a comfortable livelihood, but were in a fair way to reach a decent independence.

But independence merely was not the goal at which Falke's avarice aimed; he wished to be rich, —*very* rich; and, as he had early discovered that wealth came but slowly by the common highway of industry, he formed the idea at last that he should obtain the object of his ambition by some unforeseen and sudden stroke of fortune; and, when once this belief had obtained possession of his vigorous mind, he found room in it for no other idea, and

began to talk of the subject to Donald Douglas as if it were a matter of absolute certainty. The latter, who took for gospel everything Falke said, told it about among his neighbors, and the rumor soon spread that William Falke had either actually sold himself for money to the Evil One, or that he had had an offer to that end from the Prince of the Lower World.

At first Falke laughed at these reports; but gradually his mind adopted the idea that some spirit could disclose a treasure to him if he would, and he ceased to contradict his neighbors when they questioned him concerning his fatal bargain. He continued to follow his business, but with far less zeal than he had formerly shown, and often lost the time which he had been wont to devote to fishing and other useful labors, in idle search for means by which suddenly to obtain enormous riches. As ill luck would have it, moreover, as he was standing one day on the seashore, gazing with excited hopes over the restless ocean, a big wave rolled up to his feet, among a mass of loose seaweed and pebbles, a yellow bullet—a bullet of precious gold.

William stood like one entranced; his hopes then had not been mere idle dreams, for the sea had given him gold, pure and precious gold, perhaps the relic of some heavy ingot which the waves had worn

away against the ocean bed to the size of a rifle-ball. And now his imagination conceived the idea that a richly-freighted vessel must have been wrecked years ago on this shore, and that he was the one marked out by destiny to discover its treasures.

Henceforth, this was his sole aim in life; musing ever on his hopes, reserved in the presence of his closest friends, he neglected all other pursuits to spend his days and nights on this beach, where he passed the time in casting into the sea, not nets for fishes, but a peculiarly constructed scoop for the recovery of sunken gold. But he found nothing save poverty, for his own earnings utterly ceased, and Donald's indolent labors were not sufficient to support both. In his search for greater treasures vanished not only the gold he had obtained by chance, but by degrees the whole accumulations of the two friends. But, as in earlier times Douglas had trusted to Falke for the greater part of his support, so now he submitted without a murmur to his comrade's profitless aberrations; and it was precisely this submissive patience which incited Falke still more to continue his unceasing search for treasure.

And what urged him to increased exertions was that, as often as he lay down to rest his weary limbs,

his ear caught a whisper of strange words, whose meaning at the time he thought he understood, and which, nevertheless, he could never remember on waking. To be sure, he knew not what connection this circumstance, strange as it was, had with his present efforts; but, on a disposition like William Falke's, every incident had its effect, and this mysterious whisper only helped to strengthen him in the belief that some great good fortune was in store for him, which assumed in his uncultivated mind only the shape of a huge pile of gold.

One day a tempest overtook him on the shore where he had found the golden bullet, and its severity drove him to take refuge in a neighboring cave. This cave, which the inhabitants called the Cavern of Steenfoll, consisted of a long subterranean passage, open to the sea by two wide mouths, through which the waves rushed with a roar like that of an angry lion. It was accessible from the land only in one place, a crevice opening above, and was rarely visited by any but adventurous boys, while to its natural dangers was added the tradition of its being haunted.

William descended this crevice with much difficulty, and perched himself on a rock under an overhanging cliff, where, with the roaring waves at his feet and the storm above his head, he fell into his

usual train of thought about the wrecked ship. Spite of all his inquiries, he had never been able to learn, even from the old residents of the place, of any shipwreck in the neighborhood.

How long he sat there, he was himself unconscious; but, waking at last from his dreamy abstraction, he discovered that the storm was over, and he was about to reascend to the upper air, when a voice issued from the deep, and the word "Carmilhan" fell distinctly on his ear. Terrified, he hastened to escape from the cave and gazed down into the empty abyss. "Great God!" he cried, "that is the word which has pursued me in my dreams. For the love of heaven, what can it mean?"

"Carmilhan!" was sighed once more by the voice, as he took his last step out of the cavern, and he fled like a frightened doe to his hut.

But William was no coward. The thing had come upon him unexpectedly; but his thirst for gold was too strong to permit him to be deterred by an appearance of danger from following his perilous path. He persevered. Once, late in the night, while fishing for treasure by moonlight near the cavern of Steenfol, his scoop was caught by something beneath the water. He pulled with all his force, but the mass remained immovable. Meanwhile the wind increased, dark clouds enveloped the

heavens, his boat rocked violently and threatened to upset. But Falke was not to be diverted from his purpose. He pulled and pulled till the resistance at length ceased, and, feeling no weight, he supposed his rope had parted. But at the same instant that the clouds rolled together and concealed the moon, a round, dark mass appeared above the surface, and the external "Carmilhan" sounded in his ear. He extended his arm to grasp the prize, but it vanished instantly in the pitchy darkness, and the fury of the gale compelled him to seek shelter under the neighboring cliff. He fell asleep from mere exhaustion, to suffer anew in his dreams, through the power of his imagination, the misery to which his restless thirst for riches subjected him during the day.

When he awoke, the early beams of the rising sun were glancing from the now tranquil mirror of the ocean. He was on the point of starting again to resume his accustomed labors, when he noticed something approaching in the distance. He soon perceived it to be a boat, and recognized in it a human figure; and was startled to observe that it was advancing with no assistance from sail or oar, and that its prow pointed steadily to the shore, although its occupant seemed unconscious of its course.

The boat continued to advance, and at length

stopped alongside of William's skiff. The voyager proved to be a little, shriveled man, in a suit of yellow linen and tall red night-cap, who sat, with his eyes shut, as immovable as any corpse. After shouting at and punching him to no purpose, Falke was on the point of attaching a rope to the boat and towing it away, when the little man opened his eyes and began to speak in a tone which filled even the stout-hearted fisherman with horror.

"Where am I?" he asked, in Dutch, drawing a deep sigh.

Falke, who had learned a little of the language from Dutch herring fishermen, told him the name of the island, and inquired who he was and what brought him there.

"I come to look for the *Carmilhan*."

"The *Carmilhan*! In God's name, what is the *Carmilhan*?" cried the excited fisherman.

"I answer not questions put to me in that form," replied the spectre, with a shudder.

"Well, well," shouted Falke, "what is the *Carmilhan*?"

"The *Carmilhan* is now nothing; but was once a fair ship, laden with more gold than vessel ever carried before."

"Where did she sink, and when?"

"A hundred years ago; where, I know not. I

come to find the place, and to recover the lost treasure. If you will help me, we will share what we find."

"With all my heart. Tell me, what must I do?"

"A deed which requires courage. Just before midnight you must go to the wildest and most desolate part of this island, taking with you a cow, which you must there slay, and have with you some one to wrap you in her fresh hide. Your companion must then lay you down and leave you; and, before an hour goes by, you will know where the treasures of the *Carmilhan* are lying."

"In this way old Engrol perished, body and soul!" cried Falke in terror. "You are the Evil Spirit," he continued, rowing rapidly away. "Away with you! I will have no dealings with you!"

The little being gnashed his teeth, and yelled curses on the fisherman; but the latter was soon out of his hearing, and, after rounding a cliff, beyond his sight. But the discovery that the evil one was seeking to avail himself of his lust for wealth, to entice him into his snares by a golden bait, had no effect in diverting the deluded man from his purpose. On the contrary, he even hoped to take advantage of the assistance, without placing him-

self in the clutches, of the fiend; so, continuing to dredge for gold off the desolate coast, he neglected utterly the independence which the rich fishing-grounds in the neighboring waters offered him, and sank with his companion day by day into deeper poverty.

Yet, although this state of things was due solely to Falke's infatuation, and the providing sustenance for both now fell wholly on Donald, the latter never complained. He showed him always the same devotion, the same confidence in his superior intellect, as in the times when his undertakings were successful and rational; and while this submissiveness greatly increased Falke's misery, it stimulated him all the more to search for gold, hoping thereby to indemnify his generous friend for his deprivations. All this time the devilish whisper, "Carmilhan," continued to pursue him in his slumbers. In short, want, hope and avarice drove him at last into a sort of madness; and he resolved, finally, to carry out what the demon had suggested to him, although he knew well that, according to tradition, he was surrendering himself by so doing to the powers of darkness.

All Donald's dissuasions were thrown away. Falke grew the more determined the more the other implored him to desist; and the good-natured fel-

low consented at last to accompany him, and help him carry out his plan.

The hearts of both throbbed painfully as they fastened a rope round the horns of a fine cow, their last article of property, which they had raised from a calf, and which they had always refused to sell, from an unwillingness to see her pass into the hands of strangers. But the evil spirit, which had got the mastery over Falke, stifled all the better feelings of his heart, and Donald was unable to resist his will.

It was the month of September and the long nights of the Scottish winter had already begun. The evening clouds drove swiftly before the fierce night-winds; deep shadows filled the valleys, and the wet turf-bogs and the turbid channels of the streams looked black and fearful as the mouths of hell. Falke strode in front, followed by Douglas, shuddering at his own boldness, and tears filling his eyes whenever he looked at the poor animal, going so confidingly to her speedy death, to be inflicted by the same hand which had fed her so many years.

They reached, at last, a narrow, marshy vale, here and there overgrown with moss and heath and sprinkled with huge boulders. A wild mountain chain encircled the spot, losing itself in the distance in the gray evening mist. The place was rarely visited by the foot of man and they approached,

with hesitating steps, a huge stone lying in the middle of this desolate spot, and from which a frightened eagle rose screaming into the air. The cow lowed mournfully, as if conscious of the horror of the place, and of her own approaching fate; and Donald turned aside to wipe away his streaming tears. He looked down the gorge which they had just climbed, and through which he could hear the distant surging of the sea; then upwards to the mountain peaks, on which an inky cloud had settled, and from which, at intervals, descended a hollow roar. When he again looked at Falke, the latter had bound the cow to a rock, and was standing, with upraised axe, to take the poor brute's life.

It was too much for his resolution. He fell upon his knees, wringing his hands. "For heaven's sake, William," he exclaimed, in an agonizing tone, "spare her! O, spare yourself and me! Have mercy on your own soul! Or, if you are resolved thus to tempt your Maker, wait till to-morrow, and obtain some other than our darling cow for this wicked sacrifice."

"Donald, are you mad?" shrieked William, poising the axe above his head. "Shall I spare the cow and starve?"

"You shall not starve," answered Donald firmly. "While I have hands you shall not starve. I will

work for you from morning till night. But peril not the salvation of your soul, and let the poor brute live.”

“Take the axe then, and cleave my head,” cried Falke in a despairing tone. “I go not from this place till I have obtained what I desire. Can you raise the treasures of the *Carmilhan*? Can your hands earn more than the barest necessities of life? But you can end my misery. Come, let me be the sacrifice!”

“William, I plead not for myself, but for your eternal happiness! Alas! this is the altar of the Picts, and the sacrifice you bring belongs to hell.”

“I deny it,” cried Falke, with a frantic laugh. “Douglas, you are mad, and make me mad! But here,” he continued, throwing away the axe, and taking his knife as if to plunge it into his heart; “here, keep the cow at the price of your friend’s life!”

Donald was at his side in a moment, and snatching the weapon of death from his hand, seized the axe, and swinging it round his head, brought it down with such force on the forehead of the loved animal that, without a shudder, it fell dead at its master’s feet.

A flash of lightning, accompanied by a terrific peal of thunder, followed this hasty deed; and

Falke stared at his friend with the look with which a man wonders at a child who has ventured to do what he himself lacks courage to attempt. Douglas, however, seemed neither terrified by the thunder nor disconcerted by the bewildered gaze of his companion, but bent over the cow without a word and began to take off its hide. When Falke had recovered his composure, he helped him in the operation, but with a reluctance as visible as he had previously shown anxiety. Meanwhile the tempest had increased in fury, the thunder echoed in the mountains, and frightful flashes of lightning illuminated the scanty herbage of the defile, while the wind, which had not yet reached this altitude, filled the lower valleys with its wild howling. Both men found themselves drenched to the skin by the time they had finished stripping off the hide. They spread it out on the ground and Donald bound Falke firmly into it. When this was done the poor man for the first time broke the prolonged silence, and, looking down compassionately on his friend, asked in a trembling voice:

“Can I do anything more for you, William?”

“Nothing more!” answered Falke. “Farewell!”

“Farewell!” replied Donald. “God protect you, and pardon you as I do!”

These were the last words which Falke heard

from him, for the next moment he had disappeared in the increasing darkness. At the same time, one of the most violent tornadoes William had ever seen broke upon him. It began with a flash of lightning, which showed him not only the peaks and cliffs in his immediate neighborhood, but the valley below him, and the raging sea, and the rocky islands scattered about the bay, among which he thought he caught a glimpse of a large dismasted ship, which vanished again instantly in the pitchy darkness. The claps of thunder were absolutely deafening. A large mass of rocks from the cliffs above rolled down from the mountain, narrowly missing him. The rain fell in such torrents that, in a few minutes, it had overflowed the valley with a deep flood, which soon rose to Falke's shoulders; and, had not Donald fortunately laid him with the upper part of his body resting on a hillock, he would have been speedily drowned. The water continued to rise and the more Falke strove to release himself from his perilous position, the closer did the moist hide embrace him in its folds. In vain he shouted for Donald—his friend was far away. He dared not call on God in his necessity, and a shudder convulsed his frame when he attempted to supplicate the being to whose power he felt himself given over.

The water had already risen above his shoulders; already it was moistening his trembling lips. "God in heaven! I am lost!" he shrieked, as he felt the flood meet above his face. But at this moment a sound like that of a neighboring waterfall fell faintly on his ear, and his mouth was again uncovered. The torrent had forced itself a passage through its rocky barriers. The rain moderating at the same time, and the darkness of the clouds lifting a little, his despair was somewhat mitigated, and a beam of hope shone in upon his soul. But, spite of his exhaustion from a struggle like that of death, and his intense desire to escape from his imprisonment, the object of his desperate ambition had not yet been attained, and, with the disappearance of immediate danger, covetousness returned in all its strength. Satisfied that to obtain his wishes he must submit patiently to his fate, he held his peace, and soon fell into a deep sleep from cold and exhaustion.

He had slept perhaps a couple of hours, when a cold wind blowing across his face, and a sound like that of approaching waves, roused him from his oblivion. The sky had again grown dark. A flash, like that which had preceded the first tempest, lighted up once more the surrounding landscape, and he again thought he caught a glimpse of the

foreign vessel hanging for a moment on a lofty wave, close by the cliffs of Steenfoll, and then sinking suddenly into the abyss. He continued to gaze intently after the phantom, for incessant flashes now lighted up the sea, when a mountainous billow rushed up the valley, and dashed him with such force against a rock that he lost his senses. When he came to himself, the storm had passed away and the sky was clear, though the lightning still played at intervals. He was lying at the foot of the mountain range enclosing the valley, and felt himself so shattered that he could scarcely move. He heard where he lay the subdued murmur of the surf, seemingly mingled with a solemn melody like church music. The tones were at first so faint that he thought them a delusion of his senses. But nearer and clearer they came, and it seemed to him at length he could distinguish the music of a psalm which he had heard the summer before on board a Dutch herring-boat.

At last he could make out voices and thought he recognized the words of the song. The voices were now in the valley below and working himself along with great difficulty to a stone, on which he laid his head, he perceived a procession of human beings moving in his direction. Their faces showed signs of grief and misery, and their garments seemed to

drip with water. They were now at no great distance and their music ceased. At their head went several musicians, followed by a number of sailors, and behind came a tall, powerful man, in an antiquated, gold-embroidered dress, a sword by his side, and in his hand a thick Spanish cane with a golden head. At his left walked a negro boy, handing his master from time to time a long pipe, from which he drew in several solemn draughts of smoke and strode on. He drew himself up to his full height before Falke, and other less sumptuously dressed men arranged themselves on either side, all with pipes in their hands. Other persons followed these, among whom were several women, some of whom carried little children in their arms, or led them by the hand. All were in handsome but old-fashioned garments. A crowd of Dutch sailors closed the procession, each holding between his teeth a short, black pipe, which he smoked in gloomy silence.

The fisherman looked with terror on this singular assemblage, but the expectation of what was to ensue sustained his courage. They stood around him for a long time, and the smoke from their pipes rose in a cloud above their heads. The crowd continued to close up on Falke, and thicker and thicker poured the clouds from their mouths and pipes. Falke was a bold, determined man;

he had braced himself for something supernatural; but when he saw this mysterious group pressing slowly upon him, as if to crush him with their weight, his courage fell, the sweat rolled from his brow, and he thought he should die of terror. But imagine his horror when, turning his eyes, he saw the yellow dwarf at his head, sitting stark and stiff, as he had looked when he first saw him, but now, as if in ridicule of the whole assemblage, with a lighted pipe between his lips. In the deadly terror which now seized him, Falke shouted to the principal figure:

“In the name of him you serve, who are you? What do you require of me?”

The tall figure took three pulls at his pipe, more solemnly than before, and, handing it to his servant, answered:

“I am Alfred Franz van der Swelder, captain of the ship *Carmilhan* of Amsterdam, lost with all its crew on this rocky coast on its return from Batavia. These are my officers, these my passengers, and those yonder my brave sailors, who all perished with me. Why have you summoned us from our dwelling below the sea? Why do you disturb our rest?”

“I would know where lie the treasures of the *Carmilhan*?”

“At the bottom of the sea.”

"Where?"

"In the cavern of Steenfoll."

"How shall I obtain them?"

"A goose dives in the shallows after a herring. Are the treasures of the *Carmilhan* worth less?"

"How much of them shall I recover?"

"More than you can spend."

The yellow dwarf grinned, and the whole group burst into loud laughter.

"Have you finished?" asked the captain.

"I have. Farewell!"

"Farewell, till we meet again!" answered the Dutchman; and turned to go.

The musicians placed themselves in front, and the procession moved away in the same order in which it came, while the solemn song, which they had sung while approaching, grew gradually fainter in the distance, till it lost itself in the murmur of the surf.

Falke now put forth his last remaining strength and succeeded at length in liberating one arm, with which he untied the cords, and at last extricated himself wholly from the hide. He hurried home without turning his head and found poor Donald lying senseless on the ground. He brought him to his senses with much difficulty and the good fellow wept aloud for joy at seeing alive the friend whom he had supposed lost forever. This gleam of happi-

ness quickly vanished when he learned from him the desperate undertaking he was now resolved on.

“ I would rather perish, body and soul, than endure longer these naked walls, this abject wretchedness. Follow me or not—I go.”

With these words, Falke seized a torch, and, winding a rope round his waist, hastened away. Donald followed him as quickly as he could, and found him already standing on the precipice on which he had in former times found shelter from the storm, and about to let himself down by the rope into the black and roaring abyss. Finding that his dissuasions had no influence on the unhappy maniac, he made ready to follow him down; but Falke ordered him to remain above and hold the cord. With frightful exertion, for which only the maddest avarice could have given him strength and courage, Falke clambered into the abyss, and stood at last on a projecting rock under which the black and foam-streaked billows rushed thundering in.

He looked anxiously around, and saw at length something shining dimly beneath the water. He laid down his torch, and, leaping in, grasped some heavy object, which he succeeded in raising. It was an iron chest filled with gold pieces. He told his companion what he had found, but turned a deaf ear to his earnest entreaties to be satisfied with his

success and reascend. Falke thought this was but the first fruits of his long and arduous toils. He again sprang in. A loud peal of scornful laughter sounded through the cavern, and William Falke was never seen again!

Donald went home alone, an altered man. The shocks which his feeble brain had received destroyed his mind. He left everything to go to ruin, and wandered about day and night, gazing vacantly around, an object of pity and sympathy to all his former friends. One of the fishermen insists that he recognized William Falke one stormy night standing on the shore among the crew of the *Car-milhan*. On the same night vanished also Donald Douglas.

He was sought for in every direction without success. Tradition says, however, that he has often been seen since standing with Falke among the men of the spectre ship, which since that time has annually been visible in the cavern of Steenfall.

CAP'N GOLDSACK

WILLIAM SHARP

Down in the yellow bay where the scows are sleep-
ing,

Where among the dead men the sharks flit to and
fro—

There Cap'n Goldsack goes, creeping, creeping,
creeping,

Looking for his treasure down below!

Yeo, yeo, heave-a-yeo!

Creeping, creeping, creeping down
below—

Yo! ho!

Down among the tangleweed where the dead are
leaking

With the ebb an' flow o' water through their ribs
an' hollow bones,

Isaac Goldsack stoops alow, seeking, seeking,
seeking.

What's he seeking there amidst a lot o' dead
men's bones?

Yeo, yeo, heave-a-yeo!

Seeking, seeking, seeking down below—

Yo! ho!

66 *More Mystery Tales for Boys and Girls*

Twice a hundred year an' more are gone acrost the
bay,

Down acrost the yellow bay where the dead are
sleeping;

But Cap'n Goldsack gropes an' gropes from year-
long day to day—

Cap'n Goldsack gropes below, creeping, creep-
ing, creeping:

Yeo, yeo, heave-a-yeo!

Creeping, creeping, creeping down
below—

Yo! ho!



PETER RUGG, THE MISSING MAN

WILLIAM AUSTIN

FROM Jonathan Dunwell of New York, to Mr. Herman Krauff.

Sir,—Agreeably to my promise, I now relate to you all the particulars of the lost man and child which I have been able to collect. It is entirely owing to the humane interest you seemed to take in the report, that I have pursued the inquiry to the following result.

You may remember that business called me to Boston in the summer of 1820. I sailed in the packet to Providence, and when I arrived there I

learned that every seat in the stage was engaged. I was thus obliged either to wait a few hours or accept a seat with the driver, who civilly offered me that accommodation. Accordingly, I took my seat by his side, and soon found him intelligent and communicative. When we had traveled about ten miles, the horses suddenly threw their ears on their necks, as flat as a hare's. Said the driver, "Have you a surtout with you?"

"No," said I; "why do you ask?"

"You will want one soon," said he. "Do you observe the ears of all the horses?"

"Yes; and was just about to ask the reason."

"They see the storm-breeder, and we shall see him soon."

At this moment there was not a cloud visible in the firmament. Soon after, a small speck appeared in the road.

"There," said my companion, "comes the storm-breeder. He always leaves a Scotch mist behind him. By many a wet jacket do I remember him. I suppose the poor fellow suffers much himself—much more than is known to the world."

Presently a man with a child beside him, with a large black horse, and a weather-beaten chair, once built for a chaise-body, passed in great haste, apparently at the rate of twelve miles an hour. He

seemed to grasp the reins of his horse with firmness, and appeared to anticipate his speed. He seemed dejected, and looked anxiously at the passengers, particularly at the stage-driver and myself. In a moment after he passed us, the horses' ears were up, and bent themselves forward so that they nearly met.

"Who is that man?" said I; "he seems in great trouble."

"Nobody knows who he is, but his person and the child are familiar to me. I have met him more than a hundred times, and have been so often asked the way to Boston by that man, even when he was traveling directly from that town, that of late I have refused any communication with him; and that is the reason he gave me such a fixed look."

"But does he never stop anywhere?"

"I have never known him to stop anywhere longer than to inquire the way to Boston; and let him be where he may, he will tell you he cannot stay a moment, for he must reach Boston that night."

We were now ascending a high hill in Walpole; and as we had a fair view of the heavens, I was rather disposed to jeer the driver for thinking of his surtout, as not a cloud as big as a marble could be discerned.

"Do you look," said he, "in the direction whence

the man came; that is the place to look. The storm never meets him; it follows him."

We presently approached another hill; and when at the height, the driver pointed out in an eastern direction a little black speck about as big as a hat. "There," said he, "is the seed-storm. We may possibly reach Polley's before it reaches us, but the wanderer and his child will go to Providence through rain, thunder, and lightning."

And now the horses, as though taught by instinct, hastened with increased speed. The little black cloud came on rolling over the turnpike, and doubled and trebled itself in all directions. The appearance of this cloud attracted the notice of all the passengers, for after it had spread itself to a great bulk it suddenly became more limited in circumference, grew more compact, dark, and consolidated. And now the successive flashes of chain lightning caused the whole cloud to appear like a sort of irregular network, and displayed a thousand fantastic images. The driver bespoke my attention to a remarkable configuration in the cloud. He said every flash of lightning near its centre discovered to him, distinctly, the form of a man sitting in an open carriage drawn by a black horse. But in truth I saw no such thing; the man's fancy was doubtless at fault. It is a very common thing

for the imagination to paint for the senses, both in the visible and invisible world.

In the meantime the distant thunder gave notice of a shower at hand; and just as we reached Polley's tavern the rain poured down in torrents. It was soon over, the cloud passing in the direction of the turnpike toward Providence. In a few moments after, a respectable-looking man in a chaise stopped at the door. The man and child in the chair having excited some little sympathy among the passengers, the gentleman was asked if he had observed them. He said he had met them; that the man seemed bewildered, and inquired the way to Boston; that he was driving at great speed, as though he expected to outstrip the tempest; that the moment he had passed him, a thunder-clap broke directly over the man's head, and seemed to envelop both man and child, horse and carriage. "I stopped," said the gentleman, "supposing the lightning had struck him, but the horse only seemed to loom up and increase his speed; and as well as I could judge, he traveled just as fast as the thunder-cloud."

While this man was speaking, a peddler with a cart of tin merchandise came up, all dripping; and on being questioned, he said he had met that man and carriage, within a fortnight, in four different

states; that at each time he had inquired the way to Boston; and that a thunder-shower like the present had each time deluged his wagon and his wares, setting his tin pots, etc., afloat, so that he had determined to get a marine insurance for the future. But that which excited his surprise most was the strange conduct of his horse, for long before he could distinguish the man in the chair, his own horse stood still in the road, and flung back his ears. "In short," said the peddler, "I wish never to see that man and horse again; they do not look to me as though they belonged to this world."

This was all I could learn at that time; and the occurrence soon after would have become with me, "like one of those things which had never happened," had I not, as I stood recently on the doorstep of Bennett's hotel in Hartford, heard a man say, "There goes Peter Rugg and his child! he looks wet and weary, and farther from Boston than ever." I was satisfied it was the same man I had seen more than three years before; for whoever has once seen Peter Rugg can never after be deceived as to his identity.

"Peter Rugg!" said I; "and who is Peter Rugg?"

"That," said the stranger, "is more than any one can tell exactly. He is a famous traveler, held in

light esteem by all innholders, for he never stops to eat, drink or sleep. I wonder why the government does not employ him to carry the mail."

"Ay," said a bystander, "that is a thought bright only on one side; how long would it take in that case to send a letter to Boston, for Peter has already, to my knowledge, been more than twenty years traveling to that place."

"But," said I, "does the man never stop anywhere; does he never converse with any one? I saw the same man more than three years since, near Providence, and I heard a strange story about him. Pray, sir, give me some account of this man."

"Sir," said the stranger, "those who know the most respecting that man, say the least. I have heard it asserted that Heaven sometimes sets a mark on a man, either for judgment or a trial. Under which Peter Rugg now labors, I cannot say; therefore I am rather inclined to pity than to judge."

"You speak like a humane man," said I; "and if you have known him so long, I pray you will give me some account of him. Has his appearance much altered in that time?"

"Why, yes. He looks as though he never ate, drank or slept; and his child looks older than him-

self, and he looks like time broken off from eternity, and anxious to gain a resting-place."

"And how does his horse look?" said I.

"As for his horse, he looks fatter and gayer, and shows more animation and courage than he did twenty years ago. The last time Rugg spoke to me he inquired how far it was to Boston. I told him just one hundred miles.

" 'Why,' said he, 'how can you deceive me so? It is cruel to mislead a traveler. I have lost my way; pray direct me the nearest way to Boston?'

"I repeated, it was one hundred miles.

" 'How can you say so?' said he; 'I was told last evening it was but fifty, and I have traveled all night.'

" 'But,' said I, 'you are now traveling from Boston. You must turn back.'

" 'Alas,' said he, 'it is all turn back! Boston shifts with the wind, and plays all around the compass. One man tells me it is to the east, another to the west; and the guide-posts, too, they all point the wrong way.'

" 'But will you not stop and rest?' said I; 'you seem wet and weary.'

" 'Yes,' said he, 'it has been foul weather since I left home.'

" 'Stop, then, and refresh yourself.'

“ ‘I must not stop; I must reach home to-night, if possible; though I think you must be mistaken in the distance to Boston.’

“He then gave the reins to his horse, which he restrained with difficulty, and disappeared in a moment. A few days afterward I met the man a little this side of Claremont,¹ winding around the hills in Unity, at the rate, I believe, of twelve miles an hour.”

“Is Peter Rugg his real name, or has he accidentally gained that name?”

“I know not, but presume he will not deny his name; you can ask him,—for see, he has turned his horse, and is passing this way.”

In a moment a dark-colored, high-spirited horse approached, and would have passed without stopping, but I had resolved to speak to Peter Rugg, or whoever the man might be. Accordingly, I stepped into the street; and as the horse approached, I made a feint of stopping him. The man immediately reined in his horse. “Sir,” said I, “may I be so bold as to inquire if you are not Mr. Rugg? for I think I have seen you before.”

“My name is Peter Rugg,” said he. “I have unfortunately lost my way; I am wet and weary,

¹ In New Hampshire.

and will take it kindly of you to direct me to Boston."

"You live in Boston, do you; and in what street?"

"In Middle Street."

"When did you leave Boston?"

"I cannot tell precisely; it seems a considerable time."

"But how did you and your child become so wet? It has not rained here to-day."

"It has just rained a heavy shower up the river. But I shall not reach Boston to-night if I tarry. Would you advise me to take the old road or the turnpike?"

"Why, the old road is one hundred and seventeen miles, and the turnpike is ninety-seven."

"How can you say so? You impose on me; it is wrong to trifle with a traveler; you know it is but forty miles from Newburyport to Boston."

"But this is not Newburyport; this is Hartford."

"Do not deceive me, sir. Is not this town Newburyport, and the river that I have been following the Merrimac?"

"No, sir; this is Hartford, and the river the Connecticut."

He wrung his hands and looked incredulous.

“Have the rivers, too, changed their courses, as the cities have changed places? But see! the clouds are gathering in the south, and we shall have a rainy night. Ah! that fatal oath!”

He would tarry no longer; his impatient horse leaped off, his hind flanks rising like wings; he seemed to devour all before him, and to scorn all behind.

I had now, as I thought, discovered a clew to the history of Peter Rugg; and I determined, the next time my business called me to Boston, to make a further inquiry. Soon after, I was enabled to collect the following particulars from Mrs. Croft, an aged lady in Middle Street, who has resided in Boston during the last twenty years. Her narration is this:

Just at twilight last summer a person stopped at the door of the late Mrs. Rugg. Mrs. Croft on coming to the door perceived a stranger with a child by his side, in an old weather-beaten carriage, with a black horse. The stranger asked for Mrs. Rugg, and was informed that Mrs. Rugg had died at a good old age, more than twenty years before that time.

The stranger replied, “How can you deceive me so? Do ask Mrs. Rugg to step to the door.”

“Sir, I assure you Mrs. Rugg has not lived here

these twenty years; no one lives here but myself, and my name is Betsey Croft."

The stranger paused, looked up and down the street, and said, "Though the paint is rather faded, this looks like my house."

"Yes," said the child, "that is the stone before the door that I used to sit on to eat my bread and milk."

"But," said the stranger, "it seems to be on the wrong side of the street. Indeed, everything here seems to be misplaced. The streets are all changed, the town seems changed, and what is strangest of all, Catherine Rugg has deserted her husband and child. Pray," continued the stranger, "has John Foy come home from sea? He went a long voyage; he is my kinsman. If I could see him, he could give me some account of Mrs. Rugg."

"Sir," said Mrs. Croft, "I never heard of John Foy. Where did he live?"

"Just above here, in Orange-tree Lane."

"There is no such place in this neighborhood."

"What do you tell me! Are the streets gone? Orange-tree Lane is at the head of Hanover Street, near Pemberton's Hill."

"There is no such lane now."

"Madam, you cannot be serious! But you doubtless know my brother, William Rugg. He

lives in Royal Exchange Lane, near King Street."

"I know of no such lane; and I am sure there is no such street as King Street in this town."

"No such street as King Street! Why, woman, you mock me! You may as well tell me there is no King George. However, madam, you see I am wet and weary, I must find a resting-place. I will go to Hart's tavern, near the market."

"Which market, sir? for you seem perplexed; we have several markets."

"You know there is but one market near the town dock."

"Oh, the old market; but no such person has kept there these twenty years."

Here the stranger seemed disconcerted, and uttered to himself quite audibly: "Strange mistake; how much this looks like the town of Boston! It certainly has a great resemblance to it; but I perceive my mistake now. Some other Mrs. Rugg, some other Middle Street. — Then," said he, "Madam, can you direct me to Boston?"

"Why, this is Boston, the city of Boston; I know of no other Boston."

"City of Boston it may be; but it is not the Boston where I live. I recollect now, I came over a

bridge instead of a ferry. Pray, what bridge is that I just came over? ”

“ It is Charles River bridge.”

“ I perceive my mistake; there is a ferry between Boston and Charlestown; there is no bridge. Ah, I perceive my mistake. If I were in Boston my horse would carry me directly to my own door. But my horse shows by his impatience that he is in a strange place. Absurd, that I should have mistaken this place for the old town of Boston! It is a much finer city than the town of Boston. It has been built long since Boston. I fancy Boston must lie at a distance from this city, as the good woman seems ignorant of it.”

At these words his horse began to chafe, and strike the pavement with his forefeet. The stranger seemed a little bewildered, and said, “ No home to-night; ” and giving the reins to his horse passed up the street, and I saw no more of him.

It was evident that the generation to which Peter Rugg belonged had passed away.

This was all the account of Peter Rugg I could obtain from Mrs. Croft; but she directed me to an elderly man, Mr. James Felt, who lived near her, and who had kept a record of the principal occurrences for the last fifty years. At my request she sent for him; and after I had related to him the

object of my inquiry, Mr. Felt told me he had known Rugg in his youth, and that his disappearance had caused some surprise; but as it sometimes happens that men run away,—sometimes to be rid of others, and sometimes to be rid of themselves,—and Rugg took his child with him, and his own horse and chair, and as it did not appear that any creditors made a stir, the occurrence soon mingled itself in the stream of oblivion; and Rugg and his child, horse and chair were soon forgotten.

“It is true,” said Mr. Felt, “sundry stories grew out of Rugg’s affair, whether true or false I cannot tell; but stranger things have happened in my day, without even a newspaper notice.”

“Sir,” said I, “Peter Rugg is now living. I have lately seen Peter Rugg and his child, horse and chair; therefore I pray you to relate to me all you know or ever heard of him.”

“Why, my friend,” said James Felt, “that Peter Rugg is now a living man, I will not deny; but that you have seen Peter Rugg and his child is impossible, if you mean a small child; for Jenny Rugg, if living, must be at least—let me see—Boston massacre, 1770—Jenny Rugg was about ten years old. Why, sir, Jenny Rugg, if living, must be more than sixty years of age. That Peter Rugg

is living is highly probable, as he was only ten years older than myself, and I was only eighty last March; and I am as likely to live twenty years longer as any man."

Here I perceived that Mr. Felt was in his dotage, and I despaired of gaining any intelligence from him on which I could depend.

I took my leave of Mrs. Croft, and proceeded to my lodgings at the Marlborough Hotel.

"If Peter Rugg," thought I, "has been traveling since the Boston massacre, there is no reason why he should not travel to the end of time. If the present generation know little of him, the next will know less, and Peter and his child will have no hold on this world."

In the course of the evening I related my adventure in Middle Street.

"Ha!" said one of the company, smiling, "do you really think you have seen Peter Rugg? I have heard my grandfather speak of him as though he seriously believed his own story."

"Sir," said I, "pray let us compare your grandfather's story of Mr. Rugg with my own."

"Peter Rugg, sir,—if my grandfather was worthy of credit,—once lived in Middle Street, in this city. He was a man in comfortable circumstances, had a wife and one daughter, and was gen-

erally esteemed for his sober life and manners. But unhappily, his temper, at times, was altogether ungovernable, and then his language was terrible. In these fits of passion, if a door stood in his way, he would never do less than kick a panel through. He would sometimes throw his heels over his head, and come down on his feet, uttering oaths in a circle; and thus in a rage, he was the first who performed a somersault, and did what others have since learned to do for merriment and money. Once Rugg was seen to bite a tenpenny nail in halves. In those days everybody, both men and boys, wore wigs; and Peter, at these moments of violent passion, would become so profane that his wig would rise up from his head. Some said it was on account of his terrible language; others accounted for it in a more philosophical way, and said it was caused by the expansion of his scalp, as violent passion, we know, will swell the veins and expand the head. While these fits were on him, Rugg had no respect for heaven or earth. Except this infirmity, all agreed that Rugg was a good sort of a man; for when his fits were over, nobody was so ready to commend a placid temper as Peter.

“ One morning, late in autumn, Rugg, in his own chair, with a fine large bay horse, took his daughter and proceeded to Concord. On his return a violent

storm overtook him. At dark he stopped in Menotomy, now West Cambridge, at the door of a Mr. Cutter, a friend of his, who urged him to tarry the night. On Rugg's declining to stop, Mr. Cutter urged him vehemently. 'Why, Mr. Rugg,' said Cutter, 'the storm is overwhelming you. The night is exceedingly dark. Your little daughter will perish. You are in an open chair, and the tempest is increasing.' '*Let the storm increase,*' said Rugg, with a fearful oath, '*I will see home to-night, in spite of the last tempest, or may I never see home!*' At these words he gave his whip to his high-spirited horse and disappeared in a moment. But Peter Rugg did not reach home that night, nor the next; nor, when he became a missing man, could he ever be traced beyond Mr. Cutter's, in Menotomy.

"For a long time after, on every dark and stormy night the wife of Peter Rugg would fancy she heard the crack of a whip, and the fleet tread of a horse, and the rattling of a carriage passing her door. The neighbors, too, heard the same noises, and some said they knew it was Rugg's horse; the tread on the pavement was perfectly familiar to them. This occurred so repeatedly that at length the neighbors watched with lanterns, and saw the real Peter Rugg, with his own horse and chair and

the child sitting beside him, pass directly before his own door, his head turned toward his house, and himself making every effort to stop his horse, but in vain.

“The next day the friends of Mrs. Rugg exerted themselves to find her husband and child. They inquired at every public house and stable in town; but it did not appear that Rugg made any stay in Boston. No one, after Rugg had passed his own door, could give any account of him, though it was asserted by some that the clatter of Rugg’s horse and carriage over the pavements shook the houses on both sides of the streets. And this is credible, if indeed Rugg’s horse and carriage did pass on that night; for at this day, in many of the streets, a loaded truck or team in passing will shake the houses like an earthquake. However, Rugg’s neighbors never afterward watched. Some of them treated it all as a delusion, and thought no more of it. Others of a different opinion shook their heads and said nothing.

“Thus Rugg and his child, horse, and chair were soon forgotten; and probably many in the neighborhood never heard a word on the subject.

“There was indeed a rumor that Rugg was seen afterward in Connecticut, between Suffield and Hartford, passing through the country at headlong

speed. This gave occasion to Rugg's friends to make further inquiry; but the more they inquired, the more they were baffled. If they heard of Rugg one day in Connecticut, the next they heard of him winding round the hills in New Hampshire; and soon after a man in a chair, with a small child, exactly answering the description of Peter Rugg, would be seen in Rhode Island inquiring the way to Boston.

“ But that which gave a color of mystery to the story of Peter Rugg was the affair at Charlestown bridge. The toll-gatherer asserted that sometimes, on the darkest and most stormy nights, when no object could be discerned, about the time Rugg was missing, a horse and wheel-carriage, with a noise equal to a troop, would at midnight, in utter contempt of the rates of toll, pass over the bridge. This occurred so frequently that the toll-gatherer resolved to attempt a discovery. Soon after, at the usual time, apparently the same horse and carriage approached the bridge from Charlestown square. The toll-gatherer, prepared, took his stand as near the middle of the bridge as he dared, with a large three-legged stool in his hand; as the appearance passed, he threw the stool at the horse, but heard nothing except the noise of the stool skipping across the bridge. The toll-gatherer on the next day as-

served that the stool went directly through the body of the horse, and he persisted in that belief ever after. Whether Rugg, or whoever the person was, ever passed the bridge again, the toll-gatherer would never tell; and when questioned, seemed anxious to waive the subject. And thus Peter Rugg and his child, horse, and carriage, remain a mystery to this day."

This, sir, is all that I could learn of Peter Rugg in Boston.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

LONG time ago, from Amsterdam a vessel sailed
away,—

As fair a ship as ever flung aside the laughing
spray.

Upon the shore were tearful eyes, and scarfs were
in the air,

As to her, o'er the Zuyder Zee, went fond adieu and
prayer;

And brave hearts, yearning shoreward from the
outward-going ship,

Felt lingering kisses clinging still to tear-wet cheek
and lip.

She steered for some far eastern clime, and, as she
skimmed the seas,

Each taper mast was bending like a rod before the
breeze.

Her captain was a stalwart man,—an iron heart had
he,—

From childhood's days he sailed upon the rolling
Zuyder Zee:

He nothing feared upon the earth, and scarcely
heaven feared,

He would have dared and done whatever mortal
man had dared!

He looked aloft, where high in air the pennant cut
the blue,

And every rope and spar and sail was firm and
strong and true.

He turned him from the swelling sail to gaze upon
the shore,—

Ah! little thought the skipper then 'twould meet his
eye no more:

He dreamt not that an awful doom was hanging
o'er his ship,

That Vanderdecken's name would yet make pale
the speaker's lip.

The vessel bounded on her way, and spire and dome
went down,—

Ere darkness fell, beneath the wave had sunk the
distant town.

No more, no more, ye hapless crew, shall Holland
meet your eye.

In lingering hope and keen suspense, maid, wife,
and child shall die!

Away, away the vessel speeds, till sea and sky
alone

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Are round her, as her course she steers across the
torrid zone.

Away, until the North Star fades, the Southern
Cross is high,

And myriad gems of brightest beam are sparkling
in the sky.

The tropic winds are left behind; she nears the
Cape of Storms,

Where awful Tempest ever sits enthroned in wild
alarms;

Where Ocean in his anger shakes aloft his foamy
crest,

Disdainful of the weakly toys that ride upon his
breast.

Fierce swell the winds and waters round the Dutch-
man's gallant ship,

But, to their rage, defiance rings from Vander-
decken's lip:

Impotent they to make him swerve, their might he
dares despise,

As straight he holds his onward course, and wind
and wave defies.

For days and nights he struggles in the weird, un-
earthly fight.

His brow is bent, his eye is fierce, but looks of deep
affright

Amongst the mariners go round, as hopelessly they
steer:

They do not dare to murmur, but they whisper
what they fear.

Their black-browed captain awes them: 'neath his
darkened eye they quail,

And in a grim and sullen mood their bitter fate
bewail.

As some fierce rider ruthless spurs a timid, waver-
ing horse,

He drives his shapely vessel, and they watch the
reckless course,

Till once again their skipper's laugh is flung upon
the blast:

The placid ocean smiles beyond, the dreaded Cape
is passed!

Away across the Indian main the vessel northward
glides;

A thousand murmuring ripples break along her
graceful sides:

The perfumed breezes fill her sails—her destined
port she nears,—

The captain's brow has lost its frown, the mariners
their fears.

“Land ho!” at length the welcome sound the
watchful sailor sings,

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And soon within an Indian bay the ship at anchor
swings.

Not idle then the busy crew; ere long the spacious
hold

Is emptied of her western freight, and stored with
silk and gold.

Again the ponderous anchor's weighed; the shore is
left behind,

The snowy sails are bosomed out before the favor-
ing wind.

Across the warm blue Indian sea the vessel south-
ward flies,

And once again the North Star fades and Austral
beacons rise.

For home she steers! she seems to know and answer
to the word,

And swifter skims the burnished deep, like some
fair ocean-bird.

"For home! for home!" the merry crew with glad-
some voices cry,

And dark-browed Vanderdecken has a mild light in
his eye.

But once again the Cape draws near, and furious
billows rise;

And still the daring Dutchman's laugh the hurri-
cane defies.

But wildly shrieked the tempest ere the scornful
 sound had died,

A warning to the daring man to curb his impious
 pride.

A crested mountain struck the ship, and like a
 frighted bird

She trembled 'neath the awful shock. Then Van-
 derdecken heard

A pleading voice within the gale,—his better angel
 spoke,

But fled before his scowling look, as mast-high
 mountains broke

Around the trembling vessel, till the crew with
 terror paled;

But Vanderdecken never flinched, nor 'neath the
 thunders quailed.

With folded arms and stern-pressed lips, dark an-
 ger in his eye,

He answered back the threatening frown that low-
 ered o'er the sky.

With fierce defiance in his heart, and scornful look
 of flame,

He spoke, and thus with impious voice blasphemed
 God's holy name:—

“Howl on, ye winds! ye tempests, howl! your rage
 is spent in vain:

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Despite your strength, your frowns, your hate, I'll
ride upon the main.

Defiance to your idle shrieks! I'll sail upon my
path:

I cringe not for thy Maker's smile,—I care not for
His wrath!"

He ceased. An awful silence fell: the tempest and
the sea

Were hushed in sudden stillness by the Ruler's
dread decree.

The ship was riding motionless within the gather-
ing gloom;

The Dutchman stood upon the poop and heard his
dreadful doom.

The hapless crew were on the deck in swooning
terror prone,—

They, too, were bound in fearful fate. In angered
thunder-tone

The judgment words swept o'er the sea: "Go,
wretch, accurst, condemned!

Go sail for ever on the deep, by shrieking tempests
hemmed.

No home, no port, no calm, no rest, no gentle fa-
v'ring breeze,

Shall ever greet thee. Go, accurst! and battle with
the seas!

Go, braggart! struggle with the storm, nor ever
cease to live,

But bear a million times the pangs that death and
fear can give.

Away! and hide thy guilty head, a curse to all thy
kind

Who ever see thee struggling, wretch, with ocean
and with wind.

Away, presumptuous worm of earth! Go teach
thy fellow-worms

The awful fate that waits on him who braves the
King of Storms!"

'Twas o'er. A lurid lightning flash lit up the sea
and sky

Around and o'er the fated ship; then rose a wailing
cry

From every heart within her, of keen anguish and
despair;

But mercy was for them no more,—it died away in
air.

Once more the lurid light gleamed out,—the ship
was still at rest,

The crew were standing at their posts; with arms
across his breast

Still stood the captain on the poop, but bent and
crouching now

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He bowed beneath that fiat dread, and o'er his
 swarthy brow

Swept lines of anguish, as if he a thousand years of
 pain

Had lived and suffered. Then across the heaving,
 angry main

The tempest shrieked triumphant, and the angry
 waters hissed

Their vengeful hate against the toy they oftentimes
 had kissed.

And ever through the midnight storm that hapless
 crew must speed;

They try to round the stormy Cape, but never can
 succeed.

And oft when gales are wildest, and the lightning's
 vivid sheen

Flashes back the ocean's anger, still the Phantom
 Ship is seen

Ever sailing to the southward in the fierce tornado's
 swoop,

With her ghostly crew and canvas, and her captain
 on the poop,

Unrelenting, unforgiven; and 'tis said that every
 word

Of his blasphemous defiance still upon the gale is
 heard!

But Heaven help the ship near which the dismal
sailor steers,—

The doom of those is sealed to whom that Phantom
Ship appears:

They'll never reach their destined port,—they'll see
their homes no more,—

They who see the *Flying Dutchman*—never, never
reach the shore!

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

WE met the *Flying Dutchman*,
By midnight he came,
His hull was all of hell-fire,
His sails were all aflame;
Fire on the main-top,
Fire on the bow,
Fire on the gun-deck,
Fire down below.

Four-and-twenty dead men,
Those were the crew,
The devil on the bowsprit,
Fiddled as she flew,
We gave her the broadside,
Right in the dip,
Just like a candle,
Went out the ship.

THE DEAD SHIP OF HARPSWELL

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

WHAT flecks the outer gray beyond
The sundown's golden trail?
The white flash of a sea-bird's wing,
Or gleam of slanting sail?
Let young eyes watch from Neck and Point,
And sea-worn elders pray,—
The ghost of what was once a ship
Is sailing up the bay!

From gray sea-fog, from icy drift,
From peril and from pain,
The home-bound fisher greets thy lights,
O hundred-harbored Maine!
But many a keel shall seaward turn,
And many a sail outstand,
When, tall and white, the Dead Ship looms
Against the dusk of land.

She rounds the headland's bristling pines;
She threads the isle-set bay;
No spur of breeze can speed her on,
Nor ebb of tide delay.

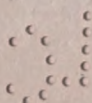
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Old men still walk the Isle of Orr
Who tell her date and name,
Old shipwrights sit in Freeport yards
Who hewed her oaken frame.

What weary doom of baffled quest,
Thou sad sea-ghost, is thine?
What makes thee in the haunts of home
A wonder and a sign?
No foot is on thy silent deck,
Upon thy helm no hand;
No ripple hath the soundless wind
That smites thee from the land!

For never comes the ship to port,
Howe'er the breeze may be;
Just when she nears the waiting shore
She drifts again to sea.
No tack of sail, nor turn of helm,
Nor sheer of veering side;
Stern-fore she drives to sea and night,
Against the wind and tide.

In vain o'er Harpswell Neck the star
Of evening guides her in;
In vain for her the lamps are lit
Within thy tower, Seguin!



In vain the harbor-boat shall hail,
In vain the pilot call;
No hand shall reef her spectral sail,
Or let her anchor fall.

Shake, brown old wives, with dreary joy,
Your gray-head hints of ill;
And, over sick-beds whispering low,
Your prophecies fulfil.
Some home amid yon birchen trees
Shall drape its door with woe;
And slowly where the Dead Ship sails,
The burial boat shall row!

From Wolf Neck and from Flying Point,
From island and from main,
From sheltered cove and tided creek,
Shall glide the funeral train.
The dead-boat with the bearers four,
The mourners at her stern,—
And one shall go the silent way
Who shall no more return!

And men shall sigh, and women weep,
Whose dear ones pale and pine,
And sadly over sunset seas
Await the ghostly sign.

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They know not that its sails are filled
By pity's tender breath,
Nor see the Angel at the helm
Who steers the Ship of Death.

THE PHANTOM LIGHT OF THE BAIE DES CHALEURS

ARTHUR WENTWORTH HAMILTON EATON

'Tis the laughter of pines that swing and sway
Where the breeze from the land meets the breeze
from the bay,
'Tis the silvery foam of the silver tide
In ripples that reach to the forest side;
'Tis the fisherman's boat, in the track of sheen,
Plying through tangled seaweed green,
O'er the Baie des Chaleurs.

Who has not heard of the phantom light
That over the moaning waves at night
Dances and drifts in endless play,
Close to the shore, then far away,
Fierce as the flame in sunset skies,
Cold as the winter light that lies
On the Baie des Chaleurs.

They tell us that many a year ago,
From lands where the palm and olive grow,
Where vines with their purple clusters creep
Over the hillsides gray and steep,

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A knight in his doublet, slashed with gold,
Famed in that chivalrous time of old,
For valorous deeds and courage rare,
Sailed with a princess wondrous fair
To the Baie des Chaleurs.

That a pirate crew from some isle of the sea,
A murderous band as e'er could be,
With a shadowy sail, and a flag of night,
That flaunted and flew in heaven's sight,
Swept in the wake of the lovers there,
And sank the ship and its freight so fair
In the Baie des Chaleurs.

Strange is the tale that the fishermen tell,—
They say that a ball of fire fell
Straight from the sky, with crash and roar,
Lighting the bay from shore to shore;
That the ship with a shudder and a groan,
Sank through the waves to the caverns lone
Of the Baie des Chaleurs.

That was the last of the pirate crew,
But many a night a black flag flew
From the mast of a spectre vessel, sailed
By a spectre band that wept and wailed,

For the wreck they had wrought on the sea and
the land,
For the innocent blood they had spilt on the sand
Of the Baie des Chaleurs.

This is the tale of the phantom light,
That fills the mariner's heart at night,
With dread as it gleams o'er his path on the bay,
Now by the shore, then far away,
Fierce as the flame in sunset skies,
Cold as the winter moon that lies
On the Baie des Chaleurs.



THE ROLL-CALL OF THE REEF

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

“YES, sir,” said my host the quarryman, reaching down the relics from their hook in the wall over the chimneypiece; “they’ve hung there all my time, and most of my father’s. The women won’t touch ’em; they’re afraid of the story. So here they’ll dangle, and gather dust and smoke, till another tenant comes and tosses ’em out o’ doors for rubbish. Whew! ’tis coarse weather.”

He went to the door, opened it, and stood studying the gale that beat upon his cottage-front, straight from the Manacle Reef. The rain drove

past him into the kitchen aslant like threads of gold silk in the shine of the wreckwood fire. Meanwhile by the same firelight I examined the relics on my knee. The metal of each one was tarnished out of knowledge. But the trumpet was evidently an old cavalry trumpet, and the threads of its parti-colored sling, though frayed and dusty, still hung together. Around the side-drum, beneath its cracked brown varnish, I could hardly trace a royal coat-of-arms and a legend running, *Per Mare per Terram*—the motto of the Marines. Its parchment, though colored and scented with wood-smoke, was limp and mildewed; and I began to tighten up the straps—under which the drumsticks had been loosely thrust—with the idle purpose of trying if some music might be got out of the old drum yet.

But as I turned it on my knee, I found the drum attached to the trumpet-sling by a curious barrel-shaped padlock, and paused to examine this. The body of the lock was composed of half a dozen brass rings, set accurately edge to edge; and, rubbing the brass with my thumb, I saw that each of the six had a series of letters engraved around it.

I knew the trick of it, I thought. Here was one of those word padlocks, once so common; only to be opened by getting the rings to spell a certain word, which the dealer confides to you.

My host shut and barred the door, and came back to the hearth.

“ ’Twas just such a wind—east by south—that brought in what you’ve got between your hands. Back in the year ’nine it was; my father has told me the tale a score o’ times. You’re twisting round the rings, I see. But you’ll never guess the word. Parson Kendall, he made the word, and knocked down a couple o’ ghosts in their graves with it; and when his time came, he went to his own grave and took the word with him.”

“ Whose ghosts, Matthew? ”

“ You want the story, I see, sir. My father could tell it better than I can. He was a young man in the year ’nine, unmarried at the time, and living in this very cottage just as I be. That’s how he came to get mixed up with the tale.”

He took a chair, lit a short pipe, and unfolded the story in a low, musing voice, with his eyes fixed on the dancing violet flames.

“ Yes, he’d ha’ been about thirty year old in January of the year ’nine. The storm got up in the night o’ the twenty-first o’ that month. My father was dressed and out long before daylight; he never was one to ’bide in bed, let be that the gale by this time was pretty near lifting the thatch over his head. Besides which, he’d fenced a small ’taty-

patch that winter, down by Lowland Point, and he wanted to see if it stood the night's work. He took the path across Gunner's Meadow—where they buried most of the bodies afterward. The wind was right in his teeth at the time, and once on the way (he's told me this often) a great strip of ore-weed came flying through the darkness and fetched him a slap on the cheek like a cold hand. But he made shift pretty well till he got to Lowland, and then had to drop upon his hands and knees and crawl, digging his fingers every now and then into the shingle to hold on, for he declared to me that the stones, some of them as big as a man's head, kept rolling and driving past till it seemed the whole foreshore was moving westward under him. The fence was gone, of course; not a stick left to show where it stood; so that, when first he came to the place, he thought he must have missed his bearings. My father, sir, was a very religious man; and if he reckoned the end of the world was at hand—there in the great wind and night, among the moving stones—you may believe he was certain of it when he heard a gun fired, and, with the same, saw a flame shoot up out of the darkness to windward, making a sudden fierce light in all the place about. All he could find to think or say was, 'The Second Coming—The Second Coming! The Bridegroom

cometh, and the wicked He will toss like a ball into a large country!’ and being already upon his knees, he just bowed his head and ’bided, saying this over and over.

“But by’m-by, between two squalls, he made bold to lift his head and look, and then by the light—a bluish color ’twas—he saw all the coast clear away to Manacle Point, and off the Manacles, in the thick of the weather, a sloop-of-war with top-gallants housed, driving stern foremost toward the reef. It was she, of course, that was burning the flare. My father could see the white streak and the ports of her quite plain as she rose to it, a little outside the breakers, and he guessed easy enough that her captain had just managed to wear ship, and was trying to force her nose to the sea with the help of her small bower anchor and the scrap or two of canvas that hadn’t yet been blown out of her. But while he looked, she fell off, giving her broadside to it foot by foot, and drifting back on the breakers around Carn dû and the Varses. The rocks lie so thick thereabouts, that ’twas a toss up which she struck first; at any rate, my father couldn’t tell at the time, for just then the flare died down and went out.

“Well, sir, he turned then in the dark and started back for Coverack to cry the dismal tidings—

though well knowing ship and crew to be past any hope; and as he turned, the wind lifted him and tossed him forward 'like a ball,' as he'd been saying, and homeward along the foreshore. As you know, 'tis ugly work, even by daylight, picking your way among the stones there, and my father was prettily knocked about at first in the dark. But by this 'twas nearer seven than six o'clock, and the day spreading. By the time he reached North Corner, a man could see to read print; hows'ever he looked neither to sea nor toward Coverack, but headed straight for the first cottage—the same that stands above North Corner to-day. A man named Billy Ede lived there then, and when my father burst into the cottage bawling, 'Wreck! wreck!' he saw Billy Ede's wife, Ann, standing there in her clogs, with a shawl over her head, and her clothes wringing wet.

" 'Save the chap!' says Billy Ede's wife, Ann. 'What d' 'ee mean by crying stale fish at that rate?'

" 'But 'tis a wreck, I tell 'ee. I've a-zeed'n!'

" 'Why, so 'tis,' says she, 'and I've a-zeed'n, too; and so has every one with an eye in his head.'

"And with that she pointed straight over my father's shoulder, and he turned; and there, close under Dolor Point, at the end of Coverack town, he

saw another wreck washing, and the Point black with people, like emmets, running to and fro in the morning light. While he stood staring at her, he heard a trumpet sounded on board, the notes coming in little jerks, like a bird rising against the wind; but faintly, of course, because of the distance and the gale blowing—though this had dropped a little.

“ ‘She’s a transport,’ said Billy Ede’s wife, Ann, ‘and full of horse soldiers, fine long men. When she struck they must ha’ pitched the hosses over first to lighten the ship, for a score of dead hosses had washed in afore I left, half an hour back. An’ three or four soldiers, too—fine long corpses in white breeches and jackets of blue and gold. I held the lantern to one. Such a straight young man.’

“ My father asked her about the trumpeting.

“ ‘That’s the queerest bit of all. She was burnin’ a light when me an’ my man joined the crowd down there. All her masts had gone; whether they were carried away, or were cut away to ease her, I don’t rightly know. Anyway, there she lay ’pon the rocks with her decks bare. Her keelson was broke under her and her bottom sagged and stove, and she had just settled down like a sitting hen—just the leastest list to starboard; but a man could stand

there easy. They had rigged up ropes across her, from bulwark to bulwark, an' beside these the men were mustered, holding on like grim death whenever the sea made a clean breach over them, an' standing up like heroes as soon as it passed. The captain an' the officers were clinging to the rail of the quarter-deck, all in their golden uniforms, waiting for the end as if 'twas King George they expected. There was no way to help, for she lay right beyond cast of line, though our folk tried it fifty times. And beside them clung a trumpeter, a whacking big man, an' between the heavy seas he would lift his trumpet with one hand, and blow a call; and every time he blew the men gave a cheer. There (she says)—hark 'ee now—there he goes agen! But you won't hear no cheering any more, for few are left to cheer, and their voices weak. Bitter cold the wind is, and I reckon it numbs their grip o' the ropes, for they were dropping off fast with every sea when my man sent me home to get his breakfast. Another wreck, you say? Well, there's no hope for the tender dears, if 'tis the Manacles. You'd better run down and help yonder; though 'tis little help that any man can give. Not one came in alive while I was there. The tide's flowing, an' she won't hold together another hour, they say.'

“ Well, sure enough, the end was coming fast when my father got down to the Point. Six men had been cast up alive, or just breathing—a seaman and five troopers. The seaman was the only one that had breath to speak; and while they were carrying him into the town, the word went round that the ship’s name was the *Despatch*, transport, homeward bound from Corunna with a detachment of the 7th Hussars, that had been fighting out there with Sir John Moore. The seas had rolled her farther over by this time, and given her decks a pretty sharp slope; but a dozen men still held on, seven by the ropes near the ship’s waist, a couple near the break of the poop, and three on the quarter-deck. Of these three my father made out one to be the skipper; close by him clung an officer in full regimentals—his name, they heard after, was Captain Duncanfield; and last came the tall trumpeter; and if you’ll believe me, the fellow was making shift there, at the very last, to blow ‘ *God Save the King.* ’ What’s more, he got to ‘ *Send us victorious* ’ before an extra big sea came bursting across and washed them off the deck—every man but one of the pair beneath the poop—and *he* dropped his hold before the next wave; being stunned, I reckon. The others went out of sight at once, but the trumpeter—being, as I said, a power-

ful man as well as a tough swimmer—rose like a duck, rode out a couple of breakers, and came in on the crest of the third. The folks looked to see him broke like an egg at their feet; but when the smother cleared, there he was, lying face downward on a ledge below them; and one of the men that happened to have a rope round him—I forget the fellow's name, if I ever heard it—jumped down and grabbed him by the ankle as he began to slip back. Before the next big sea, the pair were hauled high enough to be out of harm, and another heave brought them up to grass. Quick work; but master trumpeter wasn't quite dead; nothing worse than a cracked head and three staved ribs. In twenty minutes or so they had him in bed, with the doctor to tend him.

“Now was the time—nothing being left alive upon the transport—for my father to tell of the sloop he'd seen driving upon the Manacles. And when he got a hearing, though the most were set upon salvage, and believed a wreck in the hand, so to say, to be worth half a dozen they couldn't see, a good few volunteered to start off with him and have a look. They crossed Lowland Point; no ship to be seen on the Manacles, nor anywhere upon the sea. One or two was for calling my father a liar. ‘Wait till we come to Dean Point,’ said he. Sure

enough, on the far side of Dean Point, they found the sloop's mainmast washing about with half a dozen men lashed to it—men in red jackets—every mother's son drowned and staring; and a little farther on, just under the Dean, three or four bodies cast up on the shore, one of them a small drummer-boy, side-drum and all; and, near by, part of a ship's gig, with 'H. M. S. *Primrose*' cut on the stern-board. From this point on, the shore was littered thick with wreckage and dead bodies—the most of them marines in uniform; and in Godrevy Cove in particular, a heap of furniture from the captain's cabin, and among it a water-tight box, not much damaged, and full of papers, by which, when it came to be examined next day, the wreck was easily made out to be the *Primrose* of eighteen guns, outward bound from Portsmouth, with a fleet of transports for the Spanish War, thirty sail, I've heard, but I've never heard what became of them. Being handled by merchant skippers, no doubt they rode out the gale and reached the Tagus safe and sound. Not but what the captain of the *Primrose* (Mein was his name) did quite right to try and club-haul his vessel when he found himself under the land; only he never ought to have got there if he took proper soundings. But it's easy talking.

“The *Primrose*, sir, was a handsome vessel—for her size, one of the handsomest in the King’s service—and newly fitted out at Plymouth Dock. So the boys had brave pickings from her in the way of brass-work, ship’s instruments, and the like, let alone some barrels of stores not much spoiled. They loaded themselves with as much as they could carry, and started for home, meaning to make a second journey before the preventive men got wind of their doings and came to spoil the fun. But as my father was passing back under the Dean, he happened to take a look over his shoulder at the bodies there. ‘Hullo,’ says he, and dropped his gear, ‘I do believe there’s a leg moving!’ And, running fore, he stooped over the small drummer-boy that I told you about. The poor little chap was lying there, with his face a mass of bruises and his eyes closed; but he had shifted one leg an inch or two, and was still breathing. So my father pulled out a knife and cut him free from his drum—that was lashed on to him with a double turn of manila rope—and took him up and carried him along here, to this very room we’re sitting in. He lost a good deal by this, for when he went back to fetch his bundle the preventive men had got hold of it, and were thick as thieves along the foreshore; so that ’twas only by paying one or two to look the

other way that he picked up anything worth carrying off; which you'll allow to be hard, seeing that he was the first man to give news of the wreck.

“ Well, the inquiry was held, of course, and my father gave evidence, and for the rest they had to trust to the sloop's papers, for not a soul was saved besides the drummer-boy, and he was raving in a fever, brought on by the cold and the fright. And the seamen and the five troopers gave evidence about the loss of the *Despatch*. The tall trumpeter, too, whose ribs were healing, came forward and kissed the book; but somehow his head had been hurt in coming ashore, and he talked foolish-like, and 'twas easy seen he would never be a proper man again. The others were taken up to Plymouth, and so went their ways; but the trumpeter stayed on in Coverack; and King George, finding he was fit for nothing, sent him down a trifle of a pension after a while—enough to keep him in board and lodging, with a bit of tobacco over.

“ Now the first time that this man—William Tallifer, he called himself—met with the drummer-boy, was about a fortnight after the little chap had bettered enough to be allowed a short walk out of doors, which he took, if you please, in full regimentals. There never was a soldier so proud of his dress. His own suit had shrunk a brave bit with

the salt water; but into ordinary frock an' corduroys he declared he would not get—not if he had to go naked the rest of his life; so my father, being a good-natured man and handy with the needle, turned to and repaired damages with a piece or two of scarlet cloth cut from the jacket of one of the drowned Marines. Well, the poor little chap chanced to be standing, in this rig-out, down by the gate of Gunner's Meadow, where they had buried twoscore and over of his comrades. The morning was a fine one, early in March month; and along came the cracked trumpeter, likewise taking a stroll.

“ ‘Hullo!’ says he; ‘good-mornin’! And what might you be doin’ here?’ ”

“ ‘I was a-wishin’,’ says the boy, ‘I had a pair o’ drumsticks. Our lads were buried yonder without so much as a drum tapped or a musket fired; and that’s not Christian burial for British soldiers.’ ”

“ ‘Phut!’ says the trumpeter, and spat on the ground; ‘a parcel of Marines!’ ”

“ The boy eyed him a second or so, and answered up: ‘If I’d a tab of turf handy, I’d bung it at your mouth, you greasy cavalryman, and learn you to speak respectful of your betters. The Marines are the handiest body of men in the service.’ ”

“ The trumpeter looked down on him from the

height of six feet two, and asked: 'Did they die well?'

" 'They died very well. There was a lot of running to and fro at first, and some of the men began to cry, and a few to strip off their clothes. But when the ship fell off for the last time, Captain Mein turned and said something to Major Griffiths, the commanding officer on board, and the Major called out to me to beat to quarters. It might have been for a wedding, he sang it out so cheerful. We'd had word already that 'twas to be parade order, and the men fell in as trim and decent as if they were going to church. One or two even tried to shave at the last moment. The Major wore his medals. One of the seamen, seeing that I had hard work to keep the drum steady—the sling being a bit loose for me and the wind what you remember—lashed it tight with a piece of rope; and that saved my life afterward, a drum being as good as a cork until it's stove. I kept beating away until every man was on deck; and then the Major formed them up and told them to die like British soldiers, and the chaplain read a prayer or two—the boys standin' all the while like rocks, each man's courage keeping up the other's. The chaplain was in the middle of a prayer when she struck. In ten minutes she was gone. That was how they died, cavalryman.'

“ ‘And that was very well done, drummer of the Marines. What’s your name?’

“ ‘John Christian.’

“ ‘Mine’s William George Tallifer, trumpeter, of the 7th Light Dragoons—the Queen’s Own. I played ‘*God Save the King*’ while our men were drowning. Captain Duncanfield told me to sound a call or two, to put them in heart; but that matter of ‘*God Save the King*’ was a notion of my own. I won’t say anything to hurt the feelings of a Marine, even if he’s not much over five foot tall; but the Queen’s Own Hussars is a tearin’ fine regiment. As between horse and foot ’tis a question o’ which gets the chance. All the way from Sahagun to Corunna ’twas we that took and gave the knocks—at Mayorga and Rueda and Bennyventy.’ (The reason, sir, I can speak the names so pat is that my father learnt ’em by heart afterward from the trumpeter, who was always talking about Mayorga and Rueda and Bennyventy.) ‘We made the rear-guard, under General Paget, and drove the French every time; and all the infantry did was to sit about in wine-shops till we whipped ’em out, an’ steal an’ straggle an’ play the tom-fool in general. And when it came to a stand-up fight at Corunna, ’twas we that had to stay seasick aboard the transports, an’ watch the infantry in the thick o’ the

caper. Very well they behaved, too; 'specially the 4th Regiment, an' the 42d Highlanders, an' the Dirty Half Hundred. Oh, ay; they're decent regiments, all three. But the Queen's Own Hussars is a tearin' fine regiment. So you played on your drum when the ship was goin' down? Drummer John Christian, I'll have to get you a new pair o' drumsticks for that.'

"Well, sir, it appears that the very next day the trumpeter marched into Helston, and got a carpenter there to turn him a pair of box-wood drumsticks for the boy. And this was the beginning of one of the most curious friendships you ever heard tell of. Nothing delighted the pair more than to borrow a boat of my father and pull out to the rocks where the *Primrose* and the *Despatch* had struck and sunk; and on still days 'twas pretty to hear them out there off the Manacles, the drummer playing his tattoo—for they always took their music with them—and the trumpeter practising calls, and making his trumpet speak like an angel. But if the weather turned roughish, they'd be walking together and talking; leastwise, the youngster listened while the other discoursed about Sir John's campaign in Spain and Portugal, telling how each little skirmish befell; and of Sir John himself, and General Baird and General Paget, and Colonel

Vivian, his own commanding officer, and what kind men they were; and of the last bloody stand-up at Corunna, and so forth, as if neither could have enough.

“But all this had to come to an end in the late summer, for the boy, John Christian, being now well and strong again, must go up to Plymouth to report himself. ’Twas his own wish (for I believe King George had forgotten all about him), but his friend wouldn’t hold him back. As for the trumpeter, my father had made an arrangement to take him on as a lodger as soon as the boy left; and on the morning fixed for the start he was up at the door here by five o’clock; with his trumpet slung by his side, and all the rest of his belongings in a small valise. A Monday morning it was, and after breakfast he had fixed to walk with the boy some way on the road toward Helston, where the coach started. My father left them at breakfast together, and went out to meat the pig, and do a few odd morning jobs of that sort. When he came back, the boy was still at table, and the trumpeter standing here by the chimney-place with the drum and trumpet in his hands, hitched together just as they be at this moment.

“‘Look at this,’ he says to my father, showing him the lock; ‘I picked it up off a starving brass-

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worker in Lisbon, and it is not one of your common locks that one word of six letters will open at any time. There's *janius* in this lock; for you've only to make the ring spell any six-letter word you please, and snap down the lock upon that, and never a soul can open it—not the maker, even—until somebody comes along that knows the word you snapped it on. Now, Johnny here's goin', and he leaves his drum behind him; for, though he can make pretty music on it, the parchment sags in wet weather, by reason of the sea-water getting at it; an' if he carries it to Plymouth, they'll only condemn it and give him another. And as for me, I shan't have the heart to put lip to the trumpet any more when Johnny's gone. So we've chosen a word together, and locked 'em together upon that; and, by your leave, I'll hang 'em here together on the hook over your fireplace. Maybe Johnny'll come back; maybe not. Maybe, if he comes, I'll be dead and gone, an' he'll take 'em apart an' try their music for old sake's sake. But if he never comes, nobody can separate 'em; for nobody besides knows the word. And if you marry and have sons, you can tell 'em that here are tied together the souls of Johnny Christian, drummer, of the Marines, and William George Tallifer, once trumpeter of the Queen's Own Hussars. Amen.'

“With that he hung the two instruments ’pon the hook there; and the boy stood up and thanked my father and shook hands; and the pair went forth of the door, toward Helston.

“Somewhere on the road they took leave of one another; but nobody saw the parting, nor heard what was said between them. About three in the afternoon the trumpeter came walking back over the hill; and by the time my father came home from the fishing, the cottage was tidied up and the tea ready, and the whole place shining like a new pin. From that time for five years he lodged here with my father, looking after the house and tilling the garden; and all the while he was steadily failing, the hurt in his head spreading, in a manner, to his limbs. My father watched the feebleness growing on him, but said nothing. And from first to last neither spake a word about the drummer, John Christian; nor did any letter reach them, nor word of his doings.

“The rest of the tale you’re free to believe, sir, or not, as you please. It stands upon my father’s words, and he always declared he was ready to kiss the Book upon it before judge and jury. He said, too, that he never had the wit to make up such a yarn; and he defied any one to explain about the

lock, in particular, by any other tale. But you shall judge for yourself.

“ My father said that about three o’clock in the morning, April fourteenth of the year ’fourteen, he and William Tallifer were sitting here, just as you and I, sir, are sitting now. My father had put on his clothes a few minutes before, and was mending his spiller by the light of the horn lantern, meaning to set off before daylight to haul the trammel. The trumpeter hadn’t been to bed at all. Toward the last he mostly spent his nights (and his days, too) dozing in the elbow-chair where you sit at this minute. He was dozing then (my father said), with his chin dropped forward on his chest, when a knock sounded upon the door, and the door opened, and in walked an upright young man in scarlet regimentals.

“ He had grown a brave bit, and his face was the color of wood-ashes; but it was the drummer, John Christian. Only his uniform was different from the one he used to wear, and the figures ‘ 38 ’ shone in brass upon his collar.

“ The drummer walked past my father as if he never saw him, and stood by the elbow-chair and said:

“ ‘ Trumpeter, trumpeter, are you one with me? ’

“And the trumpeter just lifted the lids of his eyes and answered, ‘How should I not be one with you, drummer Johnny—Johnny boy? The men are patient. Till you come, I count; you march, I mark time until the discharge comes.’

“‘The discharge has come to-night,’ said the drummer, ‘and the word is Corunna no longer;’ and stepping to the chimney-place, he unhooked the drum and trumpet, and began to twist the brass rings of the lock, spelling the word aloud, so—C-O-R-U-N-A. When he had fixed the last letter, the padlock opened in his hand.

“‘Did you know, trumpeter, that when I came to Plymouth they put me into a line regiment?’

“‘The 38th is a good regiment,’ answered the old Hussar, still in his dull voice. ‘I went back with them from Sahagun to Corunna. At Corunna they stood in General Fraser’s division, on the right. They behaved well.’

“‘But I’d fain see the Marines again,’ says the drummer, handing him the trumpet, ‘and you—you shall call once more for the Queen’s Own. Matthew,’ he says, suddenly, turning on my father—and when he turned, my father saw for the first time that his scarlet jacket had a round hole by the breast-bone, and that the blood was welling there—‘Matthew, we shall want your boat.’

“Then my father rose on his legs like a man in a dream, while they two slung on, the one his drum, and t’other his trumpet. He took the lantern, and went quaking before them down to the shore, and they breathed heavily behind him; and they stepped into his boat, and my father pushed off.

“‘Row you first for Dolor Point,’ says the drummer. So my father rowed them out past the white houses of Coverack to Dolor Point, and there, at a word, lay on his oars. And the trumpeter, William Tallifer, put his trumpet to his mouth and sounded the *Revelly*. The music of it was like rivers running.

“‘They will follow,’ said the drummer. ‘Matthew, pull you now for the Manacles.’

“So my father pulled for the Manacles, and came to an easy close outside Carn dû. And the drummer took his sticks and beat a tattoo, there by the edge of the reef; and the music of it was like a rolling chariot.

“‘That will do,’ says he, breaking off; ‘they will follow. Pull now for the shore under Gunner’s Meadow.’

“Then my father pulled for the shore, and ran his boat in under Gunner’s Meadow. And they stepped out, all three, and walked up to the meadow. By the gate the drummer halted and

began his tattoo again, looking out toward the darkness over the sea.

“And while the drum beat, and my father held his breath, there came up out of the sea and the darkness a troop of many men, horse and foot, and formed up among the graves; and others rose out of the graves and formed up—drowned Marines with bleached faces, and pale Hussars riding their horses, all lean and shadowy. There was no clatter of hoofs or accoutrements, my father said, but a soft sound all the while, like the beating of a bird’s wing and a black shadow lying like a pool about the feet of all. The drummer stood upon a little knoll just inside the gate, and beside him the tall trumpeter, with hand on hip, watching them gather; and behind them both my father, clinging to the gate. When no more came the drummer stopped playing, and said, ‘Call the roll.’

“Then the trumpeter stepped toward the end man of the rank and called, ‘Troop-Sergeant-Major Thomas Irons,’ and the man in a thin voice answered, ‘Here!’

“‘Troop-Sergeant-Major Thomas Irons, how is it with you?’

“The man answered, ‘How should it be with me? When I was young, I betrayed a girl; and when I was grown, I betrayed a friend, and for

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these things I must pay. But I died as a man ought. God save the King!’

“The trumpeter called to the next man, ‘Trooper Henry Buckingham,’ and the next man answered, ‘Here!’

“ ‘Trooper Henry Buckingham, how is it with you?’

“ ‘How should it be with me? I was a drunkard, and I stole, and in Lugo, in a wine-shop, I knifed a man. But I died as a man should. God save the King!’

“So the trumpeter went down the line; and when he had finished, the drummer took it up, hailing the dead Marines in their order. Each man answered to his name, and each man ended with ‘God save the King!’ When all were hailed, the drummer stepped back to his mound, and called:

“ ‘It is well. You are content, and we are content to join you. Wait yet a little while.’

“With this he turned and ordered my father to pick up the lantern, and lead the way back. As my father picked it up, he heard the ranks of dead men cheer and call, ‘God save the King!’ all together, and saw them waver and fade back into the dark, like a breath fading off a pane.

“But when they came back here to the kitchen,

and my father set the lantern down, it seemed they'd both forgot about him. For the drummer turned in the lantern-light—and my father could see the blood still welling out of the hole in his breast—and took the trumpet-sling from around the other's neck, and locked drum and trumpet together again, choosing the letters on the lock very carefully. While he did this he said:

“ ‘The word is no more Corunna, but Bayonne. As you left out an “n” in Corunna, so must I leave out an “n” in Bayonne.’ And before snapping the padlock, he spelt out the word slowly—‘B-A-Y-O-N-E.’ After that, he used no more speech; but turned and hung the two instruments back on the hook; and then took the trumpeter by the arm; and the pair walked out into the darkness, glancing neither to right nor left.

“ My father was on the point of following, when he heard a sort of sigh behind him; and there, sitting in the elbow-chair, was the very trumpeter he had just seen walk out by the door! If my father's heart jumped before, you may believe it jumped quicker now. But after a bit, he went up to the man asleep in the chair, and put a hand upon him. It was the trumpeter in flesh and blood that he touched; but though the flesh was warm, the trumpeter was dead.

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“Well, sir, they buried him three days after; and at first my father was minded to say nothing about his dream (as he thought it). But the day after the funeral, he met Parson Kendall coming from Helston market; and the parson called out: ‘Have ’ee heard the news the coach brought down this mornin’?’ ‘What news?’ says my father. ‘Why, that peace is agreed upon.’ ‘None too soon,’ says my father. ‘Not soon enough for our poor lads at Bayonne,’ the parson answered. ‘Bayonne!’ cries my father with a jump. ‘Why, yes’; and the parson told him all about a great sally the French had made on the night of April 13th. ‘Do you happen to know if the 38th regiment was engaged?’ my father asked. ‘Come now,’ said Parson Kendall, ‘I didn’t know you was so well up in the campaign. But, as it happens, I *do* know that the 38th was engaged, for ’twas they that held a cottage and stopped the French advance.’

“Still my father held his tongue; and when, a week later, he walked into Helston and bought a ‘Mercury’ off the Sherborne rider, and got the landlord of the Angel to spell out the list of killed and wounded, sure enough, there among the killed was Drummer John Christian, of the 38th Foot.

“After this there was nothing for a religious man

but to make a clean breast. So my father went up to Parson Kendall and told the whole story. The parson listened, and put a question or two, and then asked:

“ ‘Have you tried to open the lock since that night?’

“ ‘I ha’n’t dared to touch it,’ says my father.

“ ‘Then come along and try.’ When the parson came to the cottage here, he took the things off the hook and tried the lock. ‘Did he say “*Bayonne*”? The word has seven letters.’

“ ‘Not if you spell it with one “n” as *he* did,’ says my father.

“The parson spelt it out—B-A-Y-O-N-E. ‘Whew!’ says he, for the lock had fallen open in his hand.

“He stood considering it a moment, and then he says, ‘I tell you what. I shouldn’t blab this all round the parish, if I was you. You won’t get no credit for truth-telling, and a miracle’s wasted on a set of fools. But if you like, I’ll shut down the lock again upon a holy word that no one but me shall know, and neither drummer nor trumpeter, dead or alive, shall frighten the secret out of me.’

“ ‘I wish to gracious you would, parson,’ said my father.

“The parson chose the holy word there and then,

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and shut the lock back upon it, and hung the drum and trumpet back in their place. He is gone long since, taking the word with him. And till the lock is broken by force, nobody will ever separate those twain."



IPSWICH BAR

ESTHER AND BRAINARD BATES

THE mist lay still on Heartbreak Hill,
The sea was cold below,
The waves rolled up and, one by one,
Broke heavily and slow;

And through the clouds the gray gulls fled,
The gannets whistled past,
Across the dunes the wailing loons
Hid from the rising blast.

The moaning wind, that all day long
Had haunted marsh and lea,
Went mad by night, and, beating round,
Fled shrieking out to sea.

The crested waves turned gray to white,
That tossed the drifting spar,
But far more bright the yellow light
That gleamed on Ipswich Bar.

Old Harry Main, wild Harry Main,
Upon the shifting sand
Had built a flaming beacon-light
To lure the ships to land.

“The storm breaks out and far to-night,—
They seek a port to bide;
God rest ye, sirs, on Ipswich Bar
Your ships shall surely ride.

“They see my fires, my dancing fires,
They lay their courses down,
And ill betide the mariners
That make for Ipswich town!

“ For mine the wreck, and mine the gold,—
With none to lay the blame,—
So hold ye down to-night, good sirs,
And I will feed the flame! ”

Oh, dark the night and wild the gale!
The skipper hither turned
To where, afar, on Ipswich Bar,
The treacherous beacon burned;

With singing shrouds and snapping sheets
The vessel swiftly bore
And headed for the guiding lights
Which shone along the shore.

The shoaling waters told no tale,
The tempest made no sign,
Till full before her plunging bows
Flashed out a whitened line;

She struck,—she heeled,—the parting stays
Went by with mast and spar,
And then the wave and rain beat out
The light on Ipswich Bar.

Gray dawn beneath the dying storm;
A figure gaunt and thin
Went splashing through the tangled sedge
To drag the treasure in;

For when the darkness broke away,
The lances of the moon
Had shown him where lay, bow in air,
A wrecking picaroon.

What matter if the open day
Bore witness to his shame?
'Twas his the wreck and his the gold,
And none had seen to blame.

He did not know the eyes of men
Were watching from afar,
As Harry Main went back and forth
The length of Ipswich Bar.

They told the Ipswich fisher-folk,
Who, all aghast and grim,
Came running down through Pudding Lane
In maddened search for him;

No word,—no blow,—no bitter jest,—
They did not strike or mar,
But short the shrift of Harry Main
That day on Ipswich Bar.

They marched him out at ebb of tide
Where lay the shattered wreck,
And bound him to the dripping rocks
With chains about his neck;

With chains about his guilty neck
They left him to the wave—
The lapping tide rose eagerly
To hide the wrecker's grave.

And now, when sudden storms strike down
With hoarse and threatening tones,
Old Harry Main must rise again
And gird his sea-wracked bones

To coil a cable made of sand
Which ever breaks in twain,
While echoing through the salted marsh
Is heard his clanking chain.

When rock and shoal are white with foam,
The watchers on the sands
Can see his ghostly form rise up
And wring his fettered hands.

And out at sea his cries are heard
Above the storm, and far,
Where, cold and still, old Heartbreak Hill
Looks down on Ipswich Bar.

A GREYPORT LEGEND

BRET HARTE

THEY ran through the streets of the seaport town,
They peered from the decks of the ships that lay;
The cold sea-fog that came whitening down
Was never as cold or white as they.

“Ho, Starbuck and Pinckney and Tenderden!
Run for your shallops, gather your men,
Scatter your boats on the lower bay.”

Good cause for fear! In the thick mid-day
The hulk that lay by the rotting pier,
Filled with the children in happy play,
Parted its moorings and drifted clear,
Drifted clear beyond reach or call,—
Thirteen children they were in all,—
All adrift in the lower bay!

Said a hard-faced skipper, “God help us all!
She will not float till the turning tide!”
Said his wife, “My darling will hear *my* call,
Whether in sea or heaven she bide;”

And she lifted a quavering voice and high,
Wild and strange as a sea-bird's cry,
Till they shuddered and wondered at her
side.

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The fog drove down on each laboring crew,
Veiled each from each and the sky and shore;
There was not a sound but the breath they drew,
And the lap of water and creak of oar;
 And they felt the breath of the downs, fresh
 blown
 O'er leagues of clover and cold gray stone,
 But not from the lips that had gone
 before.

They came no more. But they tell the tale
That, when fogs are thick on the harbor reef,
The mackerel fishers shorten sail—
For the signal they know will bring relief;
 For the voices of children, still at play
 In a phantom hulk that drifts alway
 Through channels whose waters never fail.

It is but a foolish shipman's tale,
A theme for a poet's idle page;
But still, when the mists of Doubt prevail,
And we lie becalmed by the shores of Age,
 We hear from the misty troubled shore
 The voice of the children gone before,
 Drawing the soul to its anchorage.

THE LAKE OF THE DISMAL SWAMP

THOMAS MOORE

“THEY made her a grave, too cold and damp
For a soul so warm and true;
And she's gone to the Lake of the Dismal
Swamp,
Where, all night long, by a firefly lamp,
She paddles her white canoe.

“And her firefly lamp I soon shall see,
And her paddle I soon shall hear;
Long and loving our life shall be,
And I'll hide the maid in a cypress-tree,
When the footstep of death is near.”

Away to the Dismal Swamp he speeds—
His path was rugged and sore,
Through tangled juniper, beds of reeds,
Through many a fen, where the serpent feeds,
And man never trod before.

And, when on the earth he sunk to sleep,
If slumber his eyelids knew,
He lay, where the deadly vine doth weep
Its venomous tear and nightly steep
The flesh with blistering dew!

And near him the she-wolf stirr'd the brake,
 And the copper-snake breath'd in his ear,
 Till he starting cried, from his dream awake,
 "Oh! when shall I see the dusky Lake,
 And the white canoe of my dear?"

He saw the Lake, and a meteor bright
 Quick over its surface play'd—
 "Welcome," he said, "my dear-one's light!"
 And the dim shore echoed, for many a night,
 The name of the death-cold maid.

Till he hollow'd a boat of the birchen bark,
 Which carried him off from shore;
 Far, far he follow'd the meteor spark,
 The wind was high and the clouds were dark,
 And the boat return'd no more.

But oft, from the Indian hunter's camp
 This lover and maid so true
 Are seen at the hour of midnight damp
 To cross the Lake by a firefly lamp,
 And paddle their white canoe!

THE THREE LOW MASSES

A Christmas Tale

ALPHONSE DAUDET

I

“Two truffled turkeys, Garrigou?”

“Yes, father, two magnificent turkeys stuffed with truffles. I know something about it, for I myself helped to stuff them. One would have said that the skin would burst when they were roasting, it was distended so.”

“Jesus-Maria! and I love turkeys so dearly. Give me my surplice quickly, Garrigou. And what else did you see in the kitchen besides the turkeys?”

“Oh, all sorts of good things. Since noon, we have done nothing but pluck pheasants, lapwings, pullets, chickens, and heath-cocks. Feathers flew in every direction. And then from the pond they brought eels, golden carp, trout, and——”

“How big are the trout, Garrigou?”

“As big as that, father. Enormous!”

“*Mon Dieu!* It seems to me that I see them. Did you put the wine in the cups?”

“Yes, father, I put the wine in the cups. But

indeed! it is no such wine as you will drink before long, after the midnight mass. If you could just look into the dining-hall at the château, and see all those decanters, filled with wines of all colors. And the silver plate, the carved centrepieces, the flowers and the candelabra! Never again will such a *réveillon*¹ be seen. Monsieur the marquis has invited all the nobles of the neighborhood. There will be at least forty at the table, without counting the notary and the bailiff. Ah! you are very fortunate to be one of them, father! Simply from smelling those fine turkeys, the odor of truffles follows me everywhere. Meuh!”

“Come, come, my boy! Let us beware of the sin of gluttony, especially on the eve of the Nativity. Go at once and light the candles, and ring the first bell for mass; for midnight is near at hand and we must not be late.”

This conversation took place on Christmas night in the year of grace one thousand six hundred and something, between the Reverend Dom Balaguère, former prior of the Barnabites, and now stipendiary chaplain of the Lords of Trinquelage, and his little clerk Garrigou, or rather him whom he believed to be his little clerk Garrigou; for you must know that the devil on that evening had assumed the round

¹A late supper; specifically, a Christmas-eve feast or revel.

face and insignificant features of the young sacristan, that he might the more easily lead the father into temptation and induce him to commit the frightful sin of gluttony. And so, while the pretended Garrigou (hum! hum!) made the bells of the seignorial chapel ring out lustily, the reverend father finished attiring himself in his chasuble, in the little sacristy of the château; and, with his mind already perturbed by all these gastronomic details, he repeated to himself as he dressed:

“Roast turkeys, golden carp, and trout as big as that!”

Without, the night wind blew, scattering abroad the music of the bells, and one after another lights appeared in the darkness on the sides of Mount Ventoux, on the summit of which rose the ancient towers of Trinquelage. They were the families of the farmers, coming to listen to the midnight mass at the château. They climbed the hill singing, in groups of five or six, the father ahead, lantern in hand, the women enveloped in their ample dark cloaks, in which the children huddled together and sheltered themselves from the sharp air. Despite the hour and the cold, all those people walked cheerily along, upheld by the thought that, after the mass, there would be a table laid for them in the kitchens, as there was every year. From time

to time, on the steep slope, the carriage of a nobleman, preceded by torch-bearers, passed with its windows gleaming in the moonlight like mirrors; or a mule trotted by, jingling his bells, and by the light of the mist-enveloped torches, the farmers recognized their bailiff and saluted him as he passed:

“ Good evening, good evening, Master Arnoton! ”

“ Good evening, good evening, my children. ”

The night was clear, the stars glistened more brightly in the frosty air; the wind had a sting in it, and a fine hoarfrost, which clung to the garments without wetting them, maintained faithfully the traditions of Christmas white with snow. At the summit of the hill, the château appeared as their destination, with its enormous mass of towers and gables, the steeple of its chapel rising into the blue-black sky; and a multitude of little twinkling lights, going and coming, flickering at every window, resembled, against the dark background of the building, sparks among the ashes of burnt paper.

The drawbridge and postern passed, they were obliged, in order to reach the chapel, to go through the first courtyard, filled with carriages, servants, bearers of sedan-chairs, brilliantly lighted by the flame of the torches and the blaze from the kitchens. One could hear the grinding of the spits, the clat-

tering of the saucepans, the clink of the glasses and silverware, being moved about in preparation for the banquet, and over it all, a warm vapor, fragrant with the odor of roasting flesh and the pungent herbs of complicated sauces, led the farmers to say, with the chaplain and the bailiff and everybody else:

“What a fine *réveillon* we are going to have after mass!”

II

Ting a ling! ting a ling, a ling!

That is the signal for the mass to begin. In the chapel of the château, a miniature cathedral with intersecting arches and oaken wainscoting reaching to the ceiling, the tapestries have been hung and all the candles lighted. And such a multitude! and such toilets! First of all, seated in the carved pews which surround the choir, is the Sire de Trinquelage, in a salmon-colored silk coat, and about him all the noble lords, his guests. Opposite, upon *prie-dieus* of silver, the old dowager marquise in her gown of flame-colored brocade has taken her place, and the young Dame de Trinquelage, with a lofty tower of lace upon her head, fluted according to the latest style at the French court. Lower down, clad in black, with enormous pointed wings and shaven

faces, are seen Thomas Arnoton the bailiff and Master Ambroy the notary, two sober notes among those shimmering silks and figured damasks. Then came the stout majordomos, the pages, the huntsmen, the stewards, and Dame Barbe with all her keys hanging at her side upon a slender silver ring. In the background, on the benches, sit the lesser functionaries, the maidservants and the farmers with their families; and lastly, at the farther end, against the door, which they open and close with care, the scullions come between two sauces to obtain a whiff of the mass, and to bring an odor of *réveillon* into the church, which is all in festal array and warm with the flame of so many candles.

Was it the sight of those little white caps which distracted the attention of the celebrant of the mass; was it not rather Garrigou's bell, that frantic little bell jingling at the foot of the altar with infernal precipitation, which seemed to be saying all the time:

"Let us hurry, let us hurry. The sooner we have finished, the sooner we shall be at the table."

The fact is that every time that that devil's own bell rang, the chaplain forgot the mass and thought only of the *réveillon*. He imagined the bustling cooks, the ovens beneath which a genuine forge fire was burning, the steam ascending from the open

saucepans, and, bathed in that steam, two superb stuffed turkeys, distended and mottled with truffles.

Or else he saw long lines of pages pass, carrying dishes surrounded by tempting vapors, and entered with them the huge room already prepared for the feast. O joy! there was the enormous table all laden, and blazing with light; the peacocks with all their feathers, the pheasants flapping their golden wings, the ruby-colored decanters, the pyramids of fruit resplendent amid the green branches, and those marvelous fish of which Garrigou had told him (ah, yes! Garrigou indeed!) lying upon a bed of fennel, their scales glittering as if they were fresh from the water, with a bunch of fragrant herbs in their monstrous nostrils. So vivid was the vision of those marvels, that it seemed to Dom Balaguère that all those wonderful dishes were actually before him on the borders of the altar-cloth; and two or three times, he surprised himself saying the *Benedicite*, instead of the *Dominus vobiscum*! Aside from these slight mistakes, the worthy man read the service most conscientiously, without skipping a line, without omitting a genuflexion; and everything went well until the end of the first mass; for you know that on Christmas day the same celebrant must say three masses in succession.

“One!” said the chaplain to himself, with a sigh

of relief; then, without wasting a minute, he motioned to his clerk, or to him whom he believed to be his clerk, and ——

Ting a ling, a ling, a ling! ting a ling!

The second mass had begun, and with it began also Dom Balaguère's sin.

“Quick, quick, let us make haste!” cried Garrigou's bell in its shrill little voice; and that time the unhappy celebrant, wholly given over to the demon of gluttony, rushed through the service and devoured the pages with the avidity of his over-excited appetite. In frenzied haste he stooped and rose, made the signs of the cross and the genuflections, and abridged all the motions, in order to have done the sooner. He barely put out his arms in the Gospel, he barely struck his breast at the *Confiteor*. The clerk and he vied with each other to see which could gabble faster. Verses and responses came rushing forth and tripped over one another. Words half pronounced, without opening the mouth, which would have taken too much time, ended in incomprehensible murmurs.

“*Oremus ps—ps—ps ——*”

“*Mea culpa—pa—pa ——*”

Like hurried vine-dressers, trampling the grapes into the vat, they both wallowed in the Latin of the mass, sending splashes in all directions.

“*Dom—scum!*” said Balaguère.

“—*Stutuo!*” replied Garrigou; and all the time the infernal little bell jangled in their ears like the bells that are put on post-horses to make them gallop at the top of their speed. As you may imagine, at that rate a low mass is soon despatched.

“Two!” said the chaplain, breathlessly; then, without taking time to breathe, flushed and perspiring, he ran down the steps of the altar, and ——

Ting a ling, ling! ting a ling, ling!

The third mass had begun. He had but a few more steps to go to reach the banquet hall; but, alas! as the *réveillon* drew nearer, the ill-fated Balaguère was seized with a frenzy of impatience and gluttony. His vision became more vivid, the golden carp, the roast turkeys were there before him; he touched them; he—O Heaven! the dishes smoked, the wines scented the air; and the little bell, frantically shaking its clapper, shouted to him:

“Quicker, quicker, still quicker!”

But how could he go any quicker? His lips barely moved. He no longer pronounced the words. He could only cheat the good Lord altogether and filch the mass from Him. And that is what he did, the villain; passing from temptation to temptation, he began by skipping one verse, then two; then the Epistle was too long, and he did not

finish it; he barely grazed the Gospel, passed the *Credo* without going in, jumped over the *Pater*, nodded to the Preface at a distance; and thus by leaps and bounds rushed into eternal damnation, still followed by the infamous Garrigou (get thee behind me, Satan!), who seconded him with wonderful alacrity, raised his chasuble, turned the leaves two by two, collided with the desks, overturned the communion-cups, and all the time shook the little bell louder and louder, faster and faster.

You should have seen the dismayed look on the faces of the whole congregation! Obligated to follow by the pantomime of the priest the mass of which they did not hear a word, some rose while the others knelt, remained seated when the others were standing; and all the phases of that extraordinary service were confused upon the benches in a multitude of diversified attitudes. The Christmas star, traveling along the roads of the sky toward the little stable, turned pale with horror when it witnessed that confusion.

"The abbé goes too fast. No one can follow him," muttered the old dowager as she nodded her head-dress in bewilderment.

Master Arnoton, his great steel spectacles on his nose, looked through his prayer-book, trying to find out where they might be. But in reality, all those

worthy folk, who also were thinking of the feast, were not sorry that the mass should travel at that lightning speed; and when Dom Balaguère, with radiant face, turned toward the congregation and shouted at the top of his voice: "*Ite missa est*," the whole chapel as with one voice responded with a "*Deo gratias*" so joyous, so infectious, that they fancied themselves already at table honoring the first toast of the *réveillon*.

III

Five minutes later the throng of nobles was seated in the great banquet-hall, the chaplain among them. The château, illuminated from top to bottom, rang with songs and shouts, and laughter and tumult; and the venerable Dom Balaguère planted his fork in the wing of a chicken, drowning his remorse for his sin in floods of the Pope's wine and in toothsome sauces. He ate and drank so much, the poor holy man, that he died during the night of a terrible attack, without even time to repent; then in the morning he arrived in heaven, which was still all astir with the festivities of the night; and I leave you to imagine how he was received there.

"Depart from my sight, thou evil Christian!" said the Sovereign Judge, the Master of us all.

“Thy sin is monstrous enough to efface a whole lifetime of virtue. Ah! thou didst steal a mass from me. Even so! thou shalt pay for three hundred masses in its place, and thou shalt not enter paradise until thou hast celebrated in thine own chapel these three hundred Christmas masses, in the presence of all those who have sinned with thee and by thy fault.”

And this is the true legend of Dom Balaguère, as it is told in the land of olives. The château of Trinquelage does not exist to-day, but the chapel still stands erect on the summit of Mount Ventoux, in a clump of green oaks. The wind sways its disjointed door, the grass grows on the threshold; there are nests at the corner of the altar and in the embrasures of the tall windows, whence the stained glass long since vanished. But it appears that every year, at Christmas, a supernatural light wanders among the ruins, and that as they go to the midnight masses and the *réveillons*, the peasants see that spectral chapel lighted by invisible candles, which burn in the open air, even in the snow and the wind. You may laugh if you please, but a vine-dresser of the neighborhood, named Garrigue, doubtless a descendant of Garrigou, tells me that one Christmas eve, being a little tipsy, he lost his

way on the mountain toward Trinquelage; and this is what he saw. Until eleven o'clock, nothing. Everything was silent, dark, lifeless. Suddenly, about midnight, a carillon rang out at the top of the belfry; an old, old carillon, which seemed to be ten leagues away. Soon, on the road up the mountain, Garrigue saw flickering flames and vague shadows. Beneath the porch of the chapel, people walked and whispered:

“ Good evening, Master Arnoton! ”

“ Good evening, good evening, my children. ”

When everybody had gone in, my vine-dresser, who was very courageous, noiselessly drew near, and looking through the broken door, saw a strange spectacle. All those people whom he had seen pass were arranged around the choir, in the ruined nave, as if the benches of olden time still existed. Fine ladies in brocade, nobles belaced from head to foot, peasants in gaudy jackets such as our great-grandfathers wore, and all with a venerable, faded, dusty, weary aspect. From time to time, night-birds, the ordinary occupants of the chapel, aroused by that blaze of light, fluttered about the candles, whose flames ascended straight toward heaven, as indistinct as if they were burning behind gauze; and one thing that amused Garrigue greatly was a certain individual with great steel spectacles, who kept

shaking his old black wig, upon which one of those birds stood erect, with its feet entangled in the hair, silently flapping its wings.

In the background, a little old man, with a childish form, kneeling in the middle of the choir, shook desperately a tongueless, voiceless bell, while a priest, dressed in old gold, went to and fro before the altar, repeating prayers of which not a word could be heard. Beyond a doubt it was Dom Balaguère, saying his third low mass.



THE HIGHWAYMAN

ALFRED NOYES

I

THE wind was a torrent of darkness among the
gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy
seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple
moor,
And the highwayman came riding—
Riding—riding—
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-
door.

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch
of lace at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown
doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up
to the thigh!
And he rode with a jeweled twinkle,
His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jeweled sky.

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the
dark inn-yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but
all was locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should
be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black
hair.

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket
creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white
and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like
mouldy hay,

But he loved the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber
say:

“ One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize
to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the
morning light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me
through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should
bar the way.”

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could
reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face
burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling
over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
(Oh, sweet black waves in the moon-
light!)

Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and
galloped away to the West.

II

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at
noon;

And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the
moon,

When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the
purple moor,

A red-coat troop came marching—

Marching—marching—

King George's men came marching, up to the old
inn-door.

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his
ale instead,

But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the
foot of her narrow bed;

Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets
at their side!

There was death at every window;

And hell at one dark window;

For Bess could see, through her casement, the road
that *he* would ride.

They had tied her up to attention, with many a
sniggering jest;

They had bound a musket beside her, with the
barrel beneath her breast!

“Now keep good watch!” and they kissed her.

She heard the dead man say—

Look for me by moonlight;

Watch for me by moonlight;

*I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should
bar the way!*

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots
held good!

She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with
sweat or blood!

They stretched and strained in the darkness, and
the hours crawled by like years,

Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,

Cold, on the stroke of midnight,

The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at
least was hers!

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more
for the rest!

Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel be-
neath her breast,

She would not risk their hearing; she would not
strive again;

For the road lay bare in the moonlight;

Blank and bare in the moonlight;

And the blood of her veins in the moonlight
throbbed to her love's refrain.

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Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The
horse-hoofs ringing clear;

Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot, in the distance? Were they
deaf that they did not hear?

Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the
hill,

The highwayman came riding,

Riding, riding!

The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood
up, straight and still!

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,* in the
echoing night!

Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a
light!

Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one
last deep breath,

Then her finger moved in the moonlight,

Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned
him—with her death.

He turned; he spurred to the West; he did not
know who stood

Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched
with her own red blood!

Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew grey to
hear

How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
 The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and
 died in the darkness there.

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse
 to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him and his
 rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-
 red was his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the highway,
 Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the
 bunch of lace at his throat.

* * * * * * *

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the
 wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon
 cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the
 purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding—
 Riding—riding—
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-
 door.*

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*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark
inn-yard;*

*He toys with his whip on the shutters, but all is
locked and barred;*

*He whistles a tune to the window, and who should
be waiting there*

But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Bess, the landlord's daughter,

*Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black
hair.*

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN

SIR WALTER SCOTT

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
He spurr'd his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
His banner broad to rear;
He went not 'gainst the English yew,
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced, and his helmet
was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

The Baron return'd in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour;
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reach'd his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor
 Ran red with English blood;
 Where the Douglas true, and the bold
 Buccleuch
 'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hack'd and hew'd,
 His acton pierced and tore.
 His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,—
 But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
 He held him close and still;
 And he whistled thrice for his little foot-page,
 His name was English Will.

“Come thou hither, my little foot-page;
 Come hither to my knee;
 Though thou art young, and tender of age,
 I think thou art true to me.

“Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
 And look thou tell me true!
 Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
 What did thy lady do?”—

“ My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild Watchfold;
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told.

“ The bittern clamor’d from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
To the eiry Beacon Hill.

“ I watch’d her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;—
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burnèd all alone.

“ The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary’s might! an armed knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

“ And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

“ The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watch'd the secret pair,
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

“ And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say, ‘ Come this night to thy lady’s bower;
Ask no bold baron’s leave.

“ ‘ He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she’ll undo, to her knight so true,
On the eve of good St. John ’—

“ ‘ I cannot come; I must not come;
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of St. John I must wander alone;
In thy bower I may not be.’—

“ ‘ Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
Is worth the whole summer’s day.

“ ‘ And I’ll chain the bloodhound, and the warder
shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strew’d on the stair;
So, by the black rood-stone, and by holy St.
John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!’

“ ‘ Though the bloodhound be mute, and the rush
beneath my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in a chamber to the
east,
And my footstep he would know’—

“ ‘ O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east!
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta’en;
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.’

“ He turn’d him around, and grimly he frown’d;
Then he laughed right scornfully—
‘ He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that
knight,
May as well say mass for me:

“ ‘ At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits
have power,
In thy chamber will I be.’—
With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see.”—

Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron’s
brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high;
“ Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast
seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die! ”—

“ His arms shone full bright, in the beacon’s
red light;
His plume it was scarlet and blue;
On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash
bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew.”—

“ Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold, and now laid in the
mould,
All under the Eildon-tree.”—

“ Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!
For I heard her name his name;
And that lady bright, she called the knight
Sir Richard of Coldinghame.”—

The bold Baron's brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale—

“ The grave is deep and dark—and the corpse is
stiff and stark—

So I may not trust thy tale.

“ Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain.

“ The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drown'd the name;
For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white
monks do sing,
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame!”

He pass'd the court-gate, and he oped the
tower-gate,

And he mounted the narrow stair,
To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on
her wait,

He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;
Look'd over hill and vale;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"—
"Now hail, thou Baron true!
What news, what news, from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"—

"The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
For many a Southron fell;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."—

The lady blush'd red, but nothing she said:
Nor added the Baron a word;
Then she stepp'd down the stair to her chamber
fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourn'd, and the Baron
toss'd and turn'd,
And oft to himself he said,—
"The worms around him creep, and his bloody
grave is deep. . . .
It cannot give up the dead!"—

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
The night was well-nigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,
On the eve of good St. John.

The lady look'd through the chamber fair,
By the light of a dying flame;
And she was aware of a knight stood there—
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

“Alas! away, away!” she cried,
“For the holy Virgin’s sake!”—
“Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side;
But, lady, he will not awake.

“By Eildon-tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain;
The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

“By the Baron’s brand, near Tweed’s fair
strand,
Most foully slain, I fell;
And my restless sprite on the beacon’s height
For a space is doom’d to dwell.

“ At our trysting-place, for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro;
But I had not had power to come to thy bower,
Hadst thou not conjured me so.”—

Love master'd fear—her brow she crossed;
“ How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved, or art thou lost? ”—
The vision shook his head!

“ Who spilleth life, shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe;
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive.”

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam,
His right upon her hand;
The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
For it scorch'd like a fiery brand.

The sable score, of fingers four,
Remains on that board impress'd;
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne'er looks upon the sun;
There is a monk in Melrose tower
He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne'er beholds the day,
That monk, who speaks to none—
That nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,
That monk the bold Baron.



WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE¹

SIR WALTER SCOTT

YE maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that Ilk, who lived in these parts before the dear years. The country will lang mind him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. He was out wi' the Hielandmen in Montrose's time; and again he was in the hills wi' Glencairn in the saxteen hundred and fifty-twa; and sae when King Charles the Second came in, wha was in sic favor as the Laird of Redgauntlet? He was knighted at Lonon court, wi' the King's

¹ Wandering Willie, a blind fiddler, is one of the characters in "Redgauntlet."

ain sword; and being a red-hot prelatist, he came down here, rampaunging like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy (and of lunacy, for what I ken), to put down a' the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. Wild wark they made of it; for the Whigs were as dour as the Cavaliers were fierce, and it was which should first tire the other. Red-gauntlet was aye for the strong hand; and his name is kend as wide in the country as Claverhouse's or Tam Dalyell's. Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave could hide the puir Hill-folk when Red-gauntlet was out with bugle and bloodhound after them, as if they had been sae mony deer. And troth when they fand them, they didna mak muckle mair ceremony than a Hielandman wi' a roebuck. It was just, "Will ye tak the test?" If not, "Make ready—present—fire!" and there lay the recusant.

Far and wide was Sir Robert hated and feared. Men thought he had a direct compact with Satan; that he was proof against steel, and that bullets happed aff his buff coat like hailstones from a hearth; that he had a mear that would turn a hare on the side of Carrifra Gawns¹—and muckle to the same purpose, of whilk mair anon. The best blessing they wared on him was, "Deil scowp wi' Red-

¹A precipitous side of a mountain in Moffatdale.

gauntlet!" He wasna a bad master to his ain folk though, and was weel aneugh liked by his tenants; and as for the lackies and troopers that raid out wi' him to the persecutions, as the Whigs ca'd those killing times, they wad hae drunken themsells blind to his health at ony time.

Now you are to ken that my gudesire lived on Redgauntlet's grund; they ca' the place Primrose Knowe. We had lived on the grund, and under the Redgauntlets, since the riding days, and lang before. It was a pleasant bit; and I think the air is callerer and fresher there than onywhere else in the country. It's a' deserted now; and I sat on the broken door-cheek three days since, and was glad I couldna see the plight the place was in; but that's a' wide o' the mark. There dwelt my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, a rambling, rattling chiel' he had been in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes; he was famous at "Hoopers and Girders," a Cumberland couldna touch him at "Jockie Lattin," and he had the finest finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle. The like o' Steenie wasna the sort that they made Whigs o'. And so he became a Tory, as they ca' it, which we now ca' Jacobites, just out of a kind of needcessity, that he might belang to some side or other. He had nae ill-will to the Whig bodies, and liked little to see

the blude rin, though, being obliged to follow Sir Robert in hunting and hosting, watching and warding, he saw muckle mischief, and maybe did some, that he couldna avoid.

Now Steenie was a kind of favorite with his master, and kend a' the folks about the castle, and was often sent for to play the pipes when they were at their merriment. Auld Dougal MacCallum, the butler, that had followed Sir Robert through gude and ill, thick and thin, pool and stream, was specially fond of the pipes, and aye gae my gudesire his gude word wi' the laird; for Dougal could turn his master round his finger.

Weel, round came the Revolution, and it had like to have broken the hearts baith of Dougal and his master. But the change was not a'thegither sae great as they feared, and other folk thought for. The Whigs made an unco crawling what they wad do with their auld enemies, and in special wi' Sir Robert Redgauntlet. But there were ower mony great folks dipped in the same doings to mak a spick and span new warld. So Parliament passed it a' ower easy; and Sir Robert, bating that he was held to hunting foxes instead of Covenanters, remained just the man he was. His revel was as loud, and his hall as weel lighted, as ever it had been, though maybe he lacked the fines of the Non-

conformists, that used to come to stock his larder and cellar; for it is certain he began to be keener about the rents than his tenants used to find him before, and they behoved to be prompt to the rent-day, or else the laird wasna pleased. And he was sic an awesome body that naebody cared to anger him; for the oaths he swore, and the rage that he used to get into, and the looks that he put on, made men sometimes think him a devil incarnate.

Weel, my gudesire was nae manager—no that he was a very great misguider—but he hadna the saving gift, and he got twa terms' rent in arrear. He got the first brash at Whitsuntide put ower wi' fair word and piping; but when Martinmas came, there was a summons from the grund-officer to come wi' the rent on a day preceese, or else Steenie behoved to flit. Sair wark he had to get the siller; but he was weel-freended, and at last he got the hail scraped thegither—a thousand merks; the maist of it was from a neighbor they ca'd Laurie Lapraik—a sly tod. Laurie had walth o' gear—could hunt wi' the hound and rin wi' the hare—and be Whig or Tory, saunt or sinner, as the wind stood. He was a professor in this Revolution warld; but he liked an orra sough of this warld, and a tune on the pipes weel aneugh at a bye-time; and abune a', he thought he had gude security for the siller he

lent my gudesire ower the stocking at Primrose Knowe.

Away trots my gudesire to Redgauntlet Castle, wi' a heavy purse and a light heart, glad to be out of the laird's danger. Weel, the first thing he learned at the castle was that Sir Robert had fretted himsell into a fit of the gout, because he did not appear before twelve o'clock. It wasna a'thegither for sake of the money, Dougal thought; but because he didna like to part wi' my gudesire aff the grund. Dougal was glad to see Steenie, and brought him into the great oak parlor, an' there sat the laird his leesome lane, excepting that he had beside him a great ill-favored jackanape, that was a special pet of his—a cankered beast it was, and mony an ill-natured trick it played; ill to please it was, and easily angered—ran about the haill castle, chattering and yowling, and pinching and biting folk, specially before ill weather, or disturbances in the state. Sir Robert ca'd it Major Weir, after the warlock that was burnt;¹ and few folk liked either the name or the conditions of the creature—they thought there was something in it by ordinar—and my gudesire was not just easy in mind when the door shut on him, and he saw him-

¹ A celebrated wizard, executed at Edinburgh for sorcery and other crimes.

self in the room wi' naebody but the laird, Dougal MacCallum, and the major, a thing that hadna chanced to him before.

Sir Robert sat, or, I should say, lay, in a great armed chair, wi' his grand velvet gown, and his feet on a cradle; for he had baith gout and gravel, and his face looked as gash and ghastly as Satan's. Major Weir sat opposite to him, in a red laced coat, and the laird's wig on his head; and aye as Sir Robert girned wi' pain, the jackanape girned too, like a sheep's-head between a pair of tangs—an ill-faur'd, fearsome couple they were. The laird's buff-coat was hung on a pin behind him, and his broadsword and his pistols within reach; for he keepit up the auld fashion of having the weapons ready, and a horse saddled day and night, just as he used to do when he was able to loup on horse-back, and away after ony of the Hill-folk he could get speerings of. Some said it was for fear of the Whigs taking vengeance, but I judge it was just his auld custom—he wasna gien to fear onything. The rental-book, wi' its black cover and brass clasps, was lying beside him; and a book of sculduddery sangs was put betwixt the leaves, to keep it open at the place where it bore evidence against the good-man of Primrose Knowe, as behind the hand with his mails and duties. Sir Robert gave my gudesire

a look as if he would have withered his heart in his bosom. Ye maun ken he had a way of bending his brows that men saw the visible mark of a horseshoe in his forehead, deep-dinted, as if it had been stamped there.

“Are ye come light-handed, ye son of a toom whistle?” said Sir Robert. “Zounds! if you are ——”

My gudesire, with as gude a countenance as he could put on, made a leg, and placed the bag of money on the table wi’ a dash, like a man that does something clever. The laird drew it to him hastily. “Is it all here, Steenie, man?”

“Your honor will find it right,” said my gudesire.

“Here, Dougal,” said the laird, “gie Steenie a tass of brandy down-stairs, till I count the siller and write the receipt.”

But they werena weel out of the room when Sir Robert gied a yellock that garr’d the castle rock. Back ran Dougal—in flew the livery-men—yell on yell gied the laird, ilk ane mair awfu’ than the ither. My gudesire knew not whether to stand or flee, but he ventured back into the parlor, where a’ was gaun hirdy-girdie—naebody to say “come in” or “gae out.” Terribly the laird roared for cauld water to his feet, and wine to cool his throat; and

“Hell, hell, hell, and its flames,” was aye the word in his mouth. They brought him water, and when they plunged his swoln feet into the tub, he cried out it was burning; and folk say that it *did* bubble and sparkle like a seething cauldron. He flung the cup at Dougal’s head, and said he had given him blood instead of burgundy; and, sure aneugh, the lass washed clotted blood aff the carpet the neist day. The jackanape they ca’d Major Weir, it jibbered and cried as if it was mocking its master. My gudesire’s head was like to turn; he forgot baith siller and receipt, and down-stairs he banged; but as he ran, the shrieks came faint and fainter; there was a deep-drawn shivering groan, and word gaed through the castle that the laird was dead.

Weel, away came my gudesire wi’ his finger in his mouth, and his best hope was that Dougal had seen the money-bag, and heard the laird speak of writing the receipt. The young laird, now Sir John, came from Edinburgh to see things put to rights. Sir John and his father never gree’d weel. Sir John had been bred an advocate, and afterwards sat in the last Scots Parliament and voted for the Union, having gotten, it was thought, a rug of the compensations; if his father could have come out of his grave he would have brained him for it on his awn hearthstane. Some thought it was easier

counting with the auld rough knight than the fair-spoken young ane—but mair of that anon.

Dougal MacCallum, poor body, neither grat nor graned, but gaed about the house looking like a corpse, but directing, as was his duty, a' the order of the grand funeral. Now, Dougal looked aye waur and waur when night was coming, and was aye the last to gang to his bed, whilk was in a little round just opposite the chamber of dais, whilk his master occupied while he was living, and where he now lay in state, as they ca'd it, weel-a-day! The night before the funeral, Dougal could keep his awn counsel nae langer; he came down with his proud spirit, and fairly asked auld Hutcheon to sit in his room with him for an hour. When they were in the round, Dougal took ae tass of brandy to himsell and gave another to Hutcheon, and wished him all health and lang life, and said that, for himsell, he wasna lang for this world; for that, every night since Sir Robert's death, his silver call had sounded from the state chamber, just as it used to do at nights in his lifetime, to call Dougal to help to turn him in his bed. Dougal said that, being alone with the dead on that floor of the tower (for naebody cared to wake Sir Robert Redgauntlet like another corpse), he had never daured to answer the call, but that now his conscience checked him for neglecting

his duty; for, "though death breaks service," said MacCallum, "it shall never break my service to Sir Robert; and I will answer his next whistle, so be you will stand by me, Hutcheon."

Hutcheon had nae will to the wark, but he had stood by Dougal in battle and broil, and he wad not fail him at this pinch; so down the carles sat ower a stoup of brandy, and Hutcheon, who was something of a clerk, would have read a chapter of the Bible; but Dougal would hear naething but a blaud of Davie Lindsay, whilk was the waur preparation.

When midnight came, and the house was quiet as the grave, sure enough the silver whistle sounded as sharp and shrill as if Sir Robert was blowing it, and up got the twa auld serving-men and tottered into the room where the dead man lay. Hutcheon saw aneugh at the first glance; for there were torches in the room, which showed him the foul fiend in his ain shape, sitting on the laird's coffin! Ower he cowped as if he had been dead. He could not tell how lang he lay in a trance at the door, but when he gathered himself he cried on his neighbor, and getting nae answer, raised the house, when Dougal was found lying dead within twa steps of the bed where his master's coffin was placed. As for the whistle, it was gaen anes and aye; but mony

a time was it heard at the top of the house on the bartizan, and amang the auld chimneys and turrets, where the howlets have their nests. Sir John hushed the matter up, and the funeral passed over without mair bogle-wark.

But when a' was ower, and the laird was beginning to settle his affairs, every tenant was called up for his arrears, and my gudesire for the full sum that stood against him in the rental-book. Weel, away he trots to the castle, to tell his story, and there he is introduced to Sir John, sitting in his father's chair, in deep mourning, with weepers and hanging cravat, and a small walking rapier by his side, instead of the auld broadsword that had a hundred weight of steel about it, what with blade, chape, and basket-hilt. I have heard their communing so often tauld ower, that I almost think I was there mysell, though I couldna be born at the time.

"I wuss ye joy, sir, of the head seat, and the white loaf, and the braid lairdship. Your father was a kind man to friends and followers; muckle grace to you, Sir John, to fill his shoon—his boots, I suld say, for he seldom wore shoon, unless it were muils when he had the gout."

"Ay, Steenie," quoth the laird, sighing deeply, and putting his napkin to his een, "his was a sud-

den call, and he will be missed in the country; no time to set his house in order; weel prepared Godward, no doubt, which is the root of the matter, but left us behind a tangled hesp to wind, Steenie. Hem! hem! We maun go to business, Steenie; much to do, and little time to do it in."

Here he opened the fatal volume. I have heard of a thing they call *Doomsday Book*—I am clear it has been a rental of back-ganging tenants.

"Stephen," said Sir John, still in the same soft, sleekit tone of voice—"Stephen Stevenson, or Steenson, ye are down here for a year's rent behind the hand, due at last term."

Stephen. "Please your honor, Sir John, I paid it to your father."

Sir John. "Ye took a receipt then, doubtless, Stephen, and can produce it?"

Stephen. "Indeed I hadna time, an it like your honor; for nae sooner had I set doun the siller, and just as his honor Sir Robert, that's gaen, drew it till him to count it, and write out the receipt, he was ta'en wi' the pains that removed him."

"That was unlucky," said Sir John, after a pause. "But ye maybe paid it in the presence of somebody. I want but a *talis qualis* evidence, Stephen. I would go ower strictly to work with no poor man."

Stephen. “Troth, Sir John, there was naebody in the room but Dougal MacCallum, the butler. But, as your honor kens, he has e’en followed his auld master.”

“Very unlucky again, Stephen,” said Sir John, without altering his voice a single note. “The man to whom ye paid the money is dead; and the man who witnessed the payment is dead, too; and the siller, which should have been to the fore, is neither seen nor heard tell of in the repositories. How am I to believe a’ this?”

Stephen. “I dinna ken, your honor; but there is a bit memorandum note of the very coins—for, God help me! I had to borrow out of twenty purses—and I am sure that ilka man there set down will take his grit oath for what purpose I borrowed the money.”

Sir John. “I have little doubt ye *borrowed* the money, Steenie. It is the *payment* to my father that I want to have some proof of.”

Stephen. “The siller maun be about the house, Sir John. And since your honor never got it, and his honor that was canna have taen it wi’ him, maybe some of the family may have seen it.”

Sir John. “We will examine the servants, Stephen; that is but reasonable.”

But lackey and lass, and page and groom, all de-

nied stoutly that they had ever seen such a bag of money as my gudesire described. What was waur, he had unluckily not mentioned to any living soul of them his purpose of paying his rent. Ae quean had noticed something under his arm, but she took it for the pipes.

Sir John Redgauntlet ordered the servants out of the room, and then said to my gudesire, "Now, Steenie, ye see you have fair play; and, as I have little doubt ye ken better where to find the siller than ony other body, I beg, in fair terms, and for your own sake, that you will end this fasherie; for, Stephen, ye maun pay or flit."

"The Lord forgie your opinion," said Stephen, driven almost to his wit's end—"I am an honest man."

"So am I, Stephen," said his honor; "and so are all the folks in the house, I hope. But if there be a knave amongst us, it must be he that tells the story he cannot prove."

He paused, and then added, mair sternly, "If I understand your trick, sir, you want to take advantage of some malicious reports concerning things in this family, and particularly respecting my father's sudden death, thereby to cheat me out of the money, and perhaps take away my character, by insinuating that I have received the rent I am demanding.

Where do you suppose this money to be? I insist upon knowing."

My gudesire saw everything look so muckle against him that he grew nearly desperate; however, he shifted from one foot to another, looked to every corner of the room, and made no answer.

"Speak out, sirrah," said the laird, assuming a look of his father's—a very particular ane, which he had when he was angry; it seemed as if the wrinkles of his frown made that selfsame fearful shape of a horse's shoe in the middle of his brow—"speak out, sir! I *will* know your thoughts. Do you suppose that I have this money?"

"Far be it frae me to say so," said Stephen.

"Do you charge any of my people with having taken it?"

"I wad be laith to charge them that may be innocent," said my gudesire; "and if there be any one that is guilty, I have nae proof."

"Somewhere the money must be, if there is a word of truth in your story," said Sir John; "I ask where you think it is, and demand a correct answer."

"In hell, if you *will* have my thoughts of it," said my gudesire, driven to extremity—"in hell! with your father, his jackanape, and his silver whistle."

Down the stairs he ran, for the parlor was nae

place for him after such a word, and he heard the laird swearing blood and wounds behind him, as fast as ever did Sir Robert, and roaring for the bailie and the baron-officer.

Away rode my gudesire to his chief creditor, him they ca'd Laurie Lapraik, to try if he could make onything out of him; but when he tauld his story, he got but the warst word in his wame—thief, beggar, and dyvour were the safest terms; and to the boot of these hard terms, Laurie brought up the auld story of his dipping his hand in the blood of God's saunts, just as if a tenant could have helped riding with the laird, and that a laird like Sir Robert Redgauntlet. My gudesire was by this time far beyond the bounds of patience, and while he and Laurie were at deil speed the liars, he was wan-chancie aneugh to abuse Lapraik's doctrine as weel as the man, and said things that garr'd folks' flesh grue that heard them; he wasna just himsell, and he had lived wi' a wild set in his day.

At last they parted, and my gudesire was to ride hame through the wood of Pitmurkie, that is a' fou of black firs, as they say. I ken the wood, but the firs may be black or white for what I can tell. At the entry of the wood there is a wild common, and on the edge of the common a little lonely change-house, that was keepit then by an ostler-wife—they

suld hae ca'd her Tibbie Faw—and there puir Steenie cried for a mutchkin of brandy, for he had had no refreshment the haill day. Tibbie was earnest wi' him to take a bite of meat, but he couldna think o't, nor would he take his foot out of the stirrup, and took off the brandy wholely at twa draughts, and named a toast at each—the first was, the memory of Sir Robert Redgauntlet, and might he never lie quiet in his grave till he had righted his poor bond-tenant; and the second was, a health to Man's Enemy, if he would but get him back the pock of siller or tell him what came o't, for he saw the haill world was like to regard him as a thief and a cheat, and he took that waur than even the ruin of his house and hauld.

On he rode, little caring where. It was a dark night turned, and the trees made it yet darker, and he let the beast take its ain road through the wood; when, all of a sudden, from tired and wearied that it was before, the nag began to spring, and flee, and stend, that my gudesire could hardly keep the saddle; upon the whilk, a horseman, suddenly riding up beside him, said, “That's a mettle beast of yours, freend; will you sell him?” So saying, he touched the horse's neck with his riding-wand, and it fell into its auld heigh-ho of a stumbling trot. “But his spunk's soon out of him, I think,” continued the

stranger, "and that is like mony a man's courage, that thinks he wad do great things till he come to the proof."

My gudesire scarce listened to this, but spurred his horse, with "Gude e'en to you, freend."

But it's like the stranger was ane that doesna lightly yield his point; for, ride as Steenie liked, he was aye beside him at the selfsame pace. At last my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, grew half angry, and, to say the truth, half feared.

"What is it that ye want with me, freend?" he said. "If ye be a robber, I have nae money; if ye be a leal man, wanting company, I have nae heart to mirth or speaking; and if ye want to ken the road, I scarce ken it mysell."

"If you will tell me your grief," said the stranger, "I am one that, though I have been sair misca'd in the world, am the only hand for helping my freends."

So my gudesire, to ease his ain heart, mair than from any hope of help, told him the story from beginning to end.

"It's a hard pinch," said the stranger; "but I think I can help you."

"If you could lend the money, sir, and take a lang day—I ken nae other help on earth," said my gudesire.

“But there may be some under the earth,” said the stranger. “Come, I’ll be frank wi’ you; I could lend you the money on bond, but you would maybe scruple my terms. Now, I can tell you that your auld laird is disturbed in his grave by your curses, and the wailing of your family, and if ye daur venture to go to see him, he will give you the receipt.”

My gudesire’s hair stood on end at this proposal, but he thought his companion might be some humorous chield that was trying to frighten him, and might end with lending him the money. Besides, he was bauld wi’ brandy, and desperate wi’ distress; and he said he had courage to go to the gate of hell, and a step farther, for that receipt.

The stranger laughed.

Weel, they rode on through the thickest of the wood, when, all of a sudden, the horse stopped at the door of a great house; and, but that he knew the place was ten miles off, my father would have thought he was at Redgauntlet Castle. They rode into the outer courtyard, through the muckle fauld-ing yetts, and aneath the auld portcullis; and the whole front of the house was lighted, and there were pipes and fiddles, and as much dancing and deray within as used to be in Sir Robert’s house at Pace and Yule, and such high seasons. They lap off, and my gudesire, as seemed to him, fastened his

horse to the very ring he had tied him to that morning, when he gaed to wait on the young Sir John.

“God!” said my gudesire, “if Sir Robert’s death be but a dream!”

He knocked at the ha’ door just as he was wont, and his auld acquaintance, Dougal MacCallum, just after his wont, too, came to open the door, and said, “Piper Steenie, are ye there, lad? Sir Robert has been crying for you.”

My gudesire was like a man in a dream; he looked for the stranger, but he was gane for the time. At last he just tried to say, “Ha! Dougal Driveower, are ye living? I thought ye had been dead.”

“Never fash yoursell wi’ me,” said Dougal, “but look to yoursell; and see ye tak naething frae onybody here, neither meat, drink, or siller, except just the receipt that is your ain.”

So saying, he led the way out through halls and trances that were weel kend to my gudesire, and into the auld oak parlor; and there was as much singing of profane songs, and birling of red wine, and speaking blasphemy and sculduddery, as had ever been in Redgauntlet Castle when it was at the blithest.

But, Lord take us in keeping! what a set of ghastly revelers they were that sat round that table! My gudesire kend mony that had long before gane

to their place, for often had he piped to the most part in the hall of Redgauntlet. There was the fierce Middleton, and the dissolute Rothes, and the crafty Lauderdale; and Dalyell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle; and Earlshall, with Cameron's blude on his hand; and wild Bonshaw, that tied blessed Mr. Cargill's limbs till the blude sprung; and Dumbarton Douglas, the twice-turned traitor baith to country and king. There was the Bluidy Advocate MacKenzie, who, for his worldly wit and wisdom, had been to the rest as a god. And there was Claverhouse, as beautiful as when he lived, with his long, dark, curled locks, streaming down over his laced buff-coat, and his left-hand always on his right spule-blade, to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made. He sat apart from them all, and looked at them with a melancholy, haughty countenance; while the rest hallooed, and sung, and laughed, that the room rang. But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time; and their laughter passed into such wild sounds as made my gudesire's very nails grow blue, and chilled the marrow in his banes.

They that waited at the table were just the wicked serving-men and troopers that had done their work and cruel bidding on earth. There was the Lang Lad of the Nethertown, that helped to

take Argyle; and the bishop's summoner, that they called the Deil's Rattle-bag; and the wicked guardsmen, in their laced coats; and the savage Highland Amorites, that shed blood like water; and mony a proud serving-man, haughty of heart and bloody of hand, cringing to the rich, and making them wickeder than they would be; grinding the poor to powder, when the rich had broken them to fragments. And mony, mony mair were coming and ganging, a' as busy in their vocation as if they had been alive.

Sir Robert Redgauntlet, in the midst of a' this fearful riot, cried, wi' a voice like thunder, on Steenie Piper to come to the board-head where he was sitting, his legs stretched out before him, and swathed up with flannel, with his holster pistols aside him, while the great broadsword rested against his chair, just as my gudesire had seen him the last time upon earth—the very cushion for the jackanape was close to him, but the creature itsell was not there; it wasna its hour, it's likely; for he heard them say as he came forward, "Is not the major come yet?" And another answered, "The jackanape will be here betimes the morn." And when my gudesire came forward, Sir Robert, or his ghaist, or the deevil in his likeness, said, "Weel, piper, hae ye settled wi' my son for the year's rent?"

With much ado my father gat breath to say that

Sir John would not settle without his honor's receipt.

"Ye shall hae that for a tune of the pipes, Steenie," said the appearance of Sir Robert. "Play us up, 'Weel hoddled, Luckie.'"

Now this was a tune my gudesire learned frae a warlock, that heard it when they were worshiping Satan at their meetings, and my gudesire had sometimes played it at the ranting suppers in Redgauntlet Castle, but never very willingly; and now he grew cauld at the very name of it, and said, for excuse, he hadna his pipes wi' him.

"MacCallum, ye limb of Beelzebub," said the fearfu' Sir Robert, "bring Steenie the pipes that I am keeping for him!"

MacCallum brought a pair of pipes might have served the piper of Donald of the Isles. But he gave my gudesire a nudge as he offered them; and looking secretly and closely, Steenie saw that the chanter was of steel, and heated to a white heat; so he had fair warning not to trust his fingers with it. So he excused himself again, and said he was faint and frightened, and had not wind aneugh to fill the bag.

"Then ye maun eat and drink, Steenie," said the figure; "for we do little else here; and it's ill speaking between a fou man and a fasting."

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Now these were the very words that the bloody Earl of Douglas said to keep the king's messenger in hand, while he cut the head off MacLellan of Bombie, at the Threave Castle, and that put Steenie mair and mair on his guard. So he spoke up like a man, and said he came neither to eat, or drink, or make minstrelsy, but simply for his ain—to ken what was come o' the money he had paid, and to get a discharge for it; and he was so stout-hearted by this time, that he charged Sir Robert for conscience' sake (he had no power to say the holy name), and as he hoped for peace and rest, to spread no snares for him, but just to give him his ain.

The appearance gnashed its teeth and laughed, but it took from a large pocket-book the receipt, and handed it to Steenie. "There is your receipt, ye pitiful cur; and for the money, my dog-whelp of a son may go look for it in the Cat's Cradle."

My gudesire uttered mony thanks, and was about to retire when Sir Robert roared aloud, "Stop though, I am not done with thee. *Here* we do nothing for nothing; and you must return on this very day twelvemonth to pay your master the homage that you owe me for my protection."

My father's tongue was loosed of a suddenty, and he said aloud, "I refer mysell to God's pleasure, and not to yours."

He had no sooner uttered the word than all was dark around him, and he sunk on the earth with such a sudden shock, that he lost both breath and sense.

How lang Steenie lay there, he could not tell; but when he came to himsell, he was lying in the auld kirkyard of Redgauntlet parochine, just at the door of the family aisle, and the scutcheon of the auld knight, Sir Robert, hanging over his head. There was a deep morning fog on grass and grave-stane around him, and his horse was feeding quietly beside the minister's twa cows. Steenie would have thought the whole was a dream, but he had the receipt in his hand, fairly written and signed by the auld laird; only the last letters of his name were a little disorderly, written like one seized with sudden pain.

Sorely troubled in his mind, he left that dreary place, rode through the mist to Redgauntlet Castle, and with much ado he got speech of the laird.

"Well, you dyvour bankrupt," was the first word, "have you brought me my rent?"

"No," answered my gudesire, "I have not; but I have brought your honor Sir Robert's receipt for it."

"How, sirrah? Sir Robert's receipt! You told me he had not given you one."

“Will your honor please to see if that bit line is right?”

Sir John looked at every line, and at every letter, with much attention, and at last at the date, which my gudesire had not observed—“‘From my appointed place,’ he read, ‘this twenty-fifth of November.’ What! That is yesterday! Villain, thou must have gone to Hell for this!”

“I got it from your honor’s father; whether he be in Heaven or Hell, I know not,” said Steenie.

“I will delate you for a warlock to the privy council!” said Sir John. “I will send you to your master, the devil, with the help of a tar-barrel and a torch!”

“I intend to delate mysell to the presbytery,” said Steenie, “and tell them all I have seen last night, whilk are things fitter for them to judge of than a borrel man like me.”

Sir John paused, composed himsell, and desired to hear the full history; and my gudesire told it him from point to point, as I have told it you—word for word, neither more nor less.

Sir John was silent again for a long time, and at last he said, very composedly, “Steenie, this story of yours concerns the honor of many a noble family besides mine; and if it be a leasing-making, to keep yourself out of my danger, the least you can expect

is to have red-hot iron driven through your tongue, and that will be as bad as scauding your fingers wi' a red-hot chanter. But yet it may be true, Steenie; and if the money cast up, I shall not know what to think of it. But where shall we find the Cat's Cradle? There are cats enough about the old house, but I think they kitten without the ceremony of bed or cradle."

"We were best ask Hutcheon," said my gude-sire; "he kens a' the odd corners about as weel as—another serving-man that is now gane, and that I wad not like to name."

Aweel, Hutcheon, when he was asked, told them that a ruinous turret, lang disused, next to the clock-house, only accessible by a ladder, for the opening was on the outside, and far above the battlements, was called of old the Cat's Cradle.

"There will I go immediately," said Sir John; and he took (with what purpose, Heaven kens) one of his father's pistols from the hall-table, where they had lain since the night he died, and hastened to the battlements.

It was a dangerous place to climb, for the ladder was auld and frail, and wanted ane or twa rounds. However, up got Sir John, and entered at the turret door, where his body stopped the only little light that was in the bit turret. Something flees at him

wi' a vengeance, maist dang him back ower; bang gaed the knight's pistol, and Hutcheon, that held the ladder, and my gudesire that stood beside him, hears a loud skelloch. A minute after, Sir John flings the body of the jackanape down to them, and cries that the siller is fund, and that they should come up and help him. And there was the bag of siller sure aneugh, and mony orra things besides that had been missing for mony a day. And Sir John, when he had riped the turret weel, led my gudesire into the dining-parlor, and took him by the hand, and spoke kindly to him, and said he was sorry he should have doubted his word, and that he would hereafter be a good master to him, to make amends.

"And now, Steenie," said Sir John, "although this vision of yours tends, on the whole, to my father's credit, as an honest man, that he should, even after his death, desire to see justice done to a poor man like you, yet you are sensible that ill-dispositioned men might make bad constructions upon it, concerning his soul's health. So, I think, we had better lay the haill dirdum on that ill-deedie creature, Major Weir, and say naething about your dream in the wood of Pitmurkie. You had taken ower muckle brandy to be very certain about onything; and, Steenie, this receipt (his hand shook

while he held it out), it's but a queer kind of document, and we will do best, I think, to put it quietly in the fire."

"Od, but for as queer as it is, it's a' the voucher I have for my rent," said my gudesire, who was afraid, it may be, of losing the benefit of Sir Robert's discharge.

"I will bear the contents to your credit in the rental-book, and give you a discharge under my own hand," said Sir John, "and that on the spot. And, Steenie, if you can hold your tongue about this matter, you shall sit, from this term downward, at an easier rent."

"Mony thanks to your honor," said Steenie, who saw easily in what corner the wind was; "doubtless I will be conformable to all your honor's commands; only I would willingly speak wi' some powerful minister on the subject, for I do not like the sort of soumons of appointment whilk your honor's father ——"

"Do not call the phantom my father!" said Sir John, interrupting him.

"Weel, then, the thing that was so like him," said my gudesire; "he spoke of my coming back to him this time twelvemonth, and it's a weight on my conscience."

"Aweel, then," said Sir John, "if you be so much

distressed in mind, you may speak to our minister of the parish; he is a douce man, regards the honor of our family, and the mair that he may look for some patronage from me."

Wi' that my father readily agreed that the receipt should be burnt, and the laird threw it into the chimney with his ain hand. Burn it would not for them, though; but away it flew up the lum, wi' a lang train of sparks at its tail, and a hissing noise like a squib.

My gudesire gaed down to the manse, and the minister, when he had heard the story, said it was his real opinion that, though my gudesire had gaen very far in tampering with dangerous matters, yet, as he had refused the devil's arles (for such was the offer of meat and drink), and had refused to do homage by piping at his bidding, he hoped, that if he held a circumspect walk hereafter, Satan could take little advantage by what was come and gane. And, indeed, my gudesire, of his ain accord, lang foreswore baith the pipes and the brandy; it was not even till the year was out, and the fatal day passed, that he would so much as take the fiddle, or drink usquebaugh or tippenny.

Sir John made up his story about the jackanape as he liked himsell; and some believe till this day there was no more in the matter than the filching

nature of the brute. Indeed, ye'll no hinder some to threap that it was nane o' the Auld Enemy that Dougal and my gudesire saw in the laird's room, but only that wanchancy creature, the major, capering on the coffin; and that, as to the blawing on the laird's whistle that was heard after he was dead, the filthy brute could do that as weel as the laird himsell, if no better. But Heaven kens the truth, whilk first came out by the minister's wife, after Sir John and her ain gudeman were baith in the moulds. And then, my gudesire, wha was failed in his limbs, but not in his judgment or memory—at least nothing to speak of—was obliged to tell the real narrative to his freends for the credit of his good name. He might else have been charged for a warlock.

EDENBAIN

ALEXANDER SMITH

YOUNG Edenbain canter'd
Across to Kilmuir,
The road was rough,
But his horse was sure.
The mighty sun taking
His splendid sea-bath,
Made golden the greenness
Of valley and strath.

He cared not for sunset,
For gold rock nor isle:
O'er his dark face there flitted
A secretive smile.

His cousin, the great
London merchant was dead,
Edenbain was his heir—
“ I'll buy lands,” he said.

“ Men fear death. How should I!
We live and we learn—
I' faith, death has done me
The handsomest turn.

Young, good-looking, thirty—
 (Hie on, Roger, hie!)
I'll taste every pleasure
 That money can buy.

“Duntulm and Dunsciach
 May laugh at my birth.
Let them laugh! Father Adam
 Was made out of earth.
What are worm-eaten castles
 And ancestry old,
'Gainst a modern purse stuff'd
 With omnipotent gold?”

He saw himself riding
 To kirk and to fair,
Hats lifting, arms nudging,
 “ That's Edenbain, there!”
He thought of each girl
 He had known in his life,
Nor could fix on which sweetness
 To pluck for a wife.

Home Edenbain canter'd,
 With pride in his heart,
When sudden he pull'd up
 His horse with a start.

The road, which was bare
 As the desert before,
 Was cover'd with people
 A hundred and more.

'Twas a black, creeping funeral;
 And Edenbain drew
 His horse to the side of
 The roadway. He knew
 In the cart rolling past
 That a coffin was laid—
 But whose? the harsh outline
 Was hid by a plaid.

The cart pass'd. The mourners
 Came marching behind:
 In front his own father,
 Greyheaded, stone-blind;
 And far-removed cousins,
 His own stock and race,
 Came after in silence,
 A cloud on each face.

Together walk'd Mugstot
 And fiery-soul'd Ord,
 Whom six days before
 He had left at his board.

Behind came the red-bearded
Sons of Tormore
With whom he was drunk
Scarce a fortnight before.

“Who is dead? Don’t they know me?”
Thought young Edenbain,
With a weird terror gathering
In heart and in brain.
In a moment the black,
Crawling funeral was gone,
And he sat on his horse
On the roadway alone.

“’Tis the second sight,” cried he:
“’Tis strange that I miss
Myself ’mong the mourners!
Whose burial is this?
My God! ’tis my own!”
And the blood left his heart,
As he thought of the dead man
That lay in the cart.

The sun, ere he sank in
His splendid sea-bath,
Saw Edenbain spur through
The golden-green strath.

Past a twilighted shepherd
At watch rush'd a horse,
With Edenbain dragged
At the stirrup, a corse.



TAM O' SHANTER

ROBERT BURNS

WHEN chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neebors, neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses.)

O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou wast a skellum,
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was na sober;
That ilka melder, wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'en on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
She prophesy'd that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in
Doon;
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld, haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd, sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale: Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter;
And ay the ale was growing better:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy:
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure;
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spread:
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form

Evanishing amid the storm.—
Nae man can tether time or tide;—
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-
 stane,
That dreary hour Tam mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd:
That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray mare, Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots son-
 net;
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.—

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw, the chapman smoor'd;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.—
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll:
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.—

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquabae, we'll face the devil!—
The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle.
But Maggie stood, right sair astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventur'd forward on the light;
And, vow! Tam saw an unco sight!

Warlocks and witches in a dance;
 Nae cotillion brent new frae France,
 But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
 Put life and mettle in their heels.
 A winnock-bunker in the east,
 There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
 A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
 To gie them music was his charge:
 He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,
 Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.—

As Tammie glowr'd, amazed, and curious,
 The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
 The piper loud and louder blew;
 The dancers quick and quicker flew;
 They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they
 cleekit,
 Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
 And coost her duddies to the wark,
 And linket at it in her sark!

But Tam kend what was fu'brawlie:
 There was ae winsome wench and wawlie,
 That night enlisted in the core,
 Lang after kend on Carrick shore

(For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonny boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the countryside in fear.)
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.—
Ah! little kend thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
Wad ever grac'd a dance of witches!

But here my Muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was, and strang,)
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very een enrich'd;
Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When, "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud:
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skriech and hollo.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin'.
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'.
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin'.
Kate soon will be a wofu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane of the brig:
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they darena cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle—
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail;
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, take heed;
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think! ye may buy the joys o'er dear,
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

THE MYSTERY OF OLD DADDY'S WINDOW

CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK

PICTURE to yourself a wild ravine, gashing a mountain spur, and with here and there in its course abrupt descents. One of these is so deep and sheer that it might be called a precipice.

High above it, from the steep slope on either hand, beetling crags jut out. Their summits almost meet at one point, and thus the space below bears a rude resemblance to a huge window. Through it you might see the blue heights in the distance; or watch the clouds and sunshine shift over the sombre mountain across the narrow valley; or mark, after the day has faded, how the great Scorpio draws its shining curves along the dark sky.

One night Jonas Creyshaw sat alone in the porch of his log cabin, hard by on the slope of the ravine, smoking his pipe and gazing meditatively at "Old Daddy's Window." The moon was full, and its rays fell aslant on one of the cliffs, while the rugged face of the opposite crag was in the shadow.

Suddenly he became aware that something was

moving about the precipice, the brink of which seems the sill of the window. Although this precipice is sheer and insurmountable, a dark figure had risen from it, and stood plainly defined against the cliff, which presented a comparatively smooth surface to the brilliant moonlight.

Was it a shadow? he asked himself hastily.

His eyes swept the ravine, only thirty feet wide at that point, which lies between the two crags whose jutting summits almost meet above it to form Old Daddy's Window.

There was no one visible to cast a shadow.

It seemed as if the figure had unaccountably emerged from the sheer depths below.

Only for a moment it stood motionless against the cliff. Then it flung its arms wildly above its head, and with a nimble spring disappeared—upward.

Jonas Creyshaw watched it, his eyes distended, his face pallid, his pipe trembling in his shaking hand.

“Mirandy!” he quavered faintly.

His wife, a thin, ailing woman with pinched features and an uncertain eye, came to the door.

“Thar,” he faltered, pointing with his pipe-stem—“jes’ a minit ago—I seen it!—a ghost riz up over the bluff inter Old Daddy’s Window!”

The woman fell instantly into a panic.

“ ’Twarn’t a-beckonin’, war it? ’Twarn’t a-beckonin’? ’Kase ef it war, ye’ll hev ter die right straight! That air a sure sign.”

A little of Jonas Creyshaw’s pluck and common sense came back to him at this unpleasant announcement.

“ Not on *his* say-so,” he stoutly averred. “ I ain’t a-goin’ ter do the beck nor the bid of enny onmannerly harnt ez hev tuk up the notion ter riz up over the bluff inter Old Daddy’s Window, an’ sot hisself ter motionin’ ter me.”

He rose hastily, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and followed his wife into the house. There he paused abruptly.

The room was lighted by the fitful flicker of the fire, for the nights were still chilly, and an old man, almost decrepit, sat dozing in his chair by the hearth.

“ Mirandy,” said Jonas Creyshaw in a whisper, “ ’pears like ter me ez father hed better not be let ter know ’bout’n that thar harnt. It mought skeer him so ez he couldn’t live another minit. He hev aged some lately—an’ he air weakly.”

This was “ Old Daddy.”

Before he had reached his thirtieth year, he was thus known, far and wide.

“He air the man ez hev got a son,” the mountaineers used to say in grinning explanation. “Ter hear him brag ’bout’n that thar boy o’ his’n, ye’d think he war the only man in Tennessee ez ever hed a son.”

Throughout all these years the name given in jocose banter had clung to him, and now, hallowed by ancient usage, it was accorded to him seriously, and had all the sonorous effect of a title.

So they said nothing to Old Daddy, but presently, when he had hobbled off to bed in the adjoining shed-room, they fell to discussing their terror of the apparition, and thus it chanced that the two boys, Tad and Si, first made, as it were, the ghost’s acquaintance.

Tad, a stalwart fellow of seventeen, sat listening spellbound before the glowing embers. Si, a wiry, active, tow-headed boy of twelve, perched with dangling legs on a chest, and looked now at the group by the fire, and now through the open door at the brilliant moonlight.

“Waal, sir,” he muttered, “I’ll hev ter gin up the notion o’ gittin’ that comical young *owel*, what I hev done set my heart onto. ’Kase ef I war ter fool round Old Daddy’s Window, *now*, whilst I war a-cotchin’ o’ the *owel*, the ghost mought—cotch—*me!*”

A sorry ghost, to be sure, that has nothing better to do than to "cotch" *him*! But perhaps Si Creyshaw is not the only one of us who has an inflated idea of his own importance.

He was greatly awed, and he found many suggestions of supernatural presence about the familiar room. As the fire alternately flared and faded, the warping-bars looked as if they were dancing a clumsy measure. The handle of a portly jug resembled an arm stuck akimbo, and its cork, tilted askew, was like a hat set on one side; Si fancied there was a most unpleasant grimace below that hat. The churn-dasher, left upon a shelf to dry, was sardonically staring him out of countenance with its half-dozen eyes. The strings of red-pepper pods and gourds and herbs, swinging from the rafters, rustled faintly; it sounded to Si like a moan.

He wished his father and mother would talk about some wholesome subject, like Spot's new calf, for instance, instead of whispering about the mystery of Old Daddy's Window. He wished Tad would not look, as he listened, so much like a ghost himself, with his starting eyes and pale, intent face. He even wished that the baby would wake up, and put some life into things with a good, healthy, rousing bawl.

But the baby slept peacefully on, and after so long a time Si Creyshaw slept too.

With broad daylight his courage revived. He was no longer afraid to think of the ghost. In fact, he experienced a pleased importance in giving Old Daddy a minute account of the wonderful apparition, for he *felt* as if he had seen it.

“’Pears ter me toler’ble comical, gran’dad, ez they never tole ye a word ’bout’n it all,” he said in conclusion. “Ye mought hev liked ter seen the harnt. Ef he war’ ’quainted with ye when he lived in this life, he mought hev stopped an’ jowed sociable fur a spell.”

How brave this small boy was in the cheerful sunshine!

Old Daddy hardly seemed impressed with the pleasure he had missed in losing a sociable “jow” with a ghostly crony. He sat silent, blinking in the sunshine that fell through the gourd-vines which clambered about the porch where Si had placed his chair.

“’Twarn’t much of a sizable sperit,” Si declared; he seemed courageous enough now to measure the ghost like a tailor. “It warn’t more’n four feet high, ez nigh ez dad could jedge. Toler’ble small fur a harnt!”

Still the old man made no reply. His wrinkled

hands were clasped on his stick. His white head, shaded by his limp black hat, was bent down close to them. There was a slow, pondering expression on his face, but an excited gleam in his eye. Presently, he pointed backward toward a little unhewn log shanty that served as a barn, and rising with unwonted alacrity, he said to the boy:

“Fotch me the old beastis!”

Silas Creyshaw stood amazed, for Old Daddy had not mounted a horse for twenty years.

“Studyin’ ’bout’n the harnt so much hev teched him in the head,” the small boy concluded. Then he made an excuse, for he knew his grandfather was too old and feeble to undertake safely a solitary jaunt on horseback.

“I war tole not ter leave ye fur a minit, gran’-dad. I war ter stay nigh ye an’ mind yer bid.”

“That’s my bid!” said the old man sternly. “Fotch the beastis.”

There was no one else about the place. Jonas Creyshaw had gone fishing shortly after daybreak. His wife had trudged off to her sister’s house down in the cove, and had taken the baby with her. Tad was ploughing in the cornfield on the other side of the ravine. Si had no advice, and he had been brought up to think that Old Daddy’s word was law.

When the old man, mounted at last, was jogging up the road, Tad chanced to come to the house for a bit of rope to mend the plough-gear. He saw, far up the leafy vista, the departing cavalier. He cast a look of amazed reproach upon Si. Then, speechless with astonishment, he silently pointed at the distant figure.

Si was a logician.

"I never lef' *him*," he said. "He lef' *me*."

"Ye oughter rej'ice in yer whole bones while ye hev got 'em," Tad returned, with withering sarcasm. "When dad kems home, some of 'em'll git bruk, sure. Warn't ye tole not ter leave him fur *nuthin'*, ye trifling shoat!"

"He lef' *me*!" Si stoutly maintained.

Meantime, Old Daddy journeyed on.

Except for the wonderful mountain air, the settlement, three miles distant, had nothing about it to indicate its elevation. It was far from the cliffs, and there was no view. It was simply a little hollow of a clearing scooped out among the immense forests. When the mountaineers clear land, they do it effectually. Not a tree was left to embellish the yards of any of the four or five little log huts that constituted the hamlet, and the glare was intense.

As six or eight loungers sat smoking about the door of the store, there was nothing to intercept

their astonished view of Old Daddy when he suddenly appeared out of the gloomy forest, blinking in the sun and bent half double with fatigue.

Even the rudest and coarsest of these mountaineers accord a praiseworthy deference to the aged among them. Old Daddy was held in reverential estimation at home, and was well accustomed to the respect shown him now, when, for the first time in many years, he had chosen to jog abroad. They helped him to dismount, and carried him bodily into the store. After he had tilted his chair back against the rude counter, he looked around with an important face upon the attentive group.

“My son,” shrilly piped out Old Daddy,—“my son air the strongest man ever seen, sence Samson!”

“I hev always hearn that sayin’, Old Daddy,” acquiesced an elderly codger, who, by reason of “rheumatics,” made no pretension to muscle.

A gigantic young blacksmith looked down at his corded hammer-arm, but said nothing.

A fly—several flies—buzzed about the sorghum barrel.

“My son,” shrilly piped out Old Daddy,—“my son air the bes’ shot on this hyar mounting.”

“That’s a true word, Old Daddy,” assented the schoolmaster, who had ceased to be a Nimrod since

devoting himself to teaching the young idea how to shoot.

The hunters smoked in solemn silence.

The shadow of a cloud drifted along the bare sandy stretch of the clearing.

“My son,” shrilly piped out Old Daddy,—“my son hev got the peartest boys in Tennessee.”

“I’ll gin ye that up, Old Daddy,” cheerfully agreed the miller, whose family consisted of two small “daughters.”

The fathers of other “peart boys” cleared their throats uneasily, but finally subsided without offering contradiction.

A jay-bird alighted on a blackberry bush outside, fluttered all his blue and white feathers, screamed harshly, bobbed his crested head, and was off on his gay wings.

“My son,” shrilly piped out Old Daddy,—“my son hev been gifted with the sight o’ what no other man on this mounting hev ever viewed.”

The group sat amazed, expectant. But the old man preserved a stately silence. Only when the storekeeper eagerly insisted, “What hev Jonas seen? what war he gin ter view?” did Old Daddy bring the fore legs of the chair down with a thump, lean forward, and mysteriously pipe out like a superannuated cricket:

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“My son,—my son hev seen a harnt, what riz up over the bluff a-purpose!”

“Whar ’bouts?” “When?” “Waal, sir!” arose in varied clamors.

So the proud old man told the story he had journeyed three laborious miles to spread. It had no terrors for him, so completely was fear swallowed up in admiration of his wonderful son, who had added to his other perfections the gift of seeing ghosts.

The men discussed it eagerly. There were some jokes cracked—as it was still broad noonday—and at one of these Old Daddy took great offense, more perhaps because the disrespect was offered to his son rather than to himself.

“Jes’ gin Jonas the word from me,” said the young blacksmith, meaning no harm and laughing good-naturedly, “ez I kin tell him percisely what makes him see harnts; it air drinkin’ so much o’ this onhealthy whiskey, what hain’t got no tax paid onto it. I looks ter see him jes’ a-staggerin’ the nex’ time I comes up with him.”

Old Daddy rose with affronted dignity.

“My son,” he declared vehemently,—“my son ain’t gin over ter drinkin’ whiskey, tax or no tax. An’ he ain’t got no call ter stagger—*like some folks!*”

And despite all apology and protest, he left the house in a huff.

His old bones ached with the unwonted exercise, and were rudely jarred by the rough roads and the awful gaits of his ancient steed. The sun was hot, and so was his heart, and when he reached home, infinitely fatigued and querulous, he gave his son a sorry account of his reception at the store. As he concluded, saying that five of the men had sent word that they would be at Jonas Creyshaw's house at moonrise "ter holp him see the harnt," his son's brow darkened, and he strode heavily out of the room.

He usually exhibited in a high degree the hospitality characteristic of these mountaineers, but now it had given way to a still stronger instinct.

"Si," he said, coming suddenly upon the boy, "put out right now fur Bently's store at the settle-*mint*, an' tell them sneaks ez hang round thar ter sarch round thar own houses fur harnts, ef they hanker ter see enny harnts. Ef they hev got the insurance ter kem hyar they'll see wusser sights 'n enny harnts. Tell 'em I ain't a-goin' ter 'low no man ter cross my doorstep ez don't show Old Daddy the right medjure o' respec'. They'd better keep out'n my way ginerally."

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So with this bellicose message Si set out. But an unlucky idea occurred to him as he went plodding along the sandy road.

“Whilst I’m a-goin’ on this hyar harnt’s yerrand——” The logical Si brought up with a shiver.

“I went ter say—whilst I’m a-goin’ on this hyar yerrand fur the harnt——” This was as bad.

“Whilst,” he qualified once more, “I’m a-goin’ on this hyar yerrand ’bout’n the harnt, I mought ez well skeet off in them deep woods a piece ter see ef enny wild cherries air ripe on that tree by the spring. I’ll hev plenty o’ time.”

But even Si could not persuade himself that the cherries were ripe, and he stood for a moment under the tree, staring disconsolately at the distant blue ridges shimmering through the heated air. The sunlight was motionless, languid; it seemed asleep. The drowsy drone of insects filled the forest. As Si threw himself down to rest on the rocky brink of the mountain, a grasshopper sprang away suddenly, high into the air, with an agility that suggested to him the chorus of a song, which he began to sing in a loud and self-sufficient voice:

“The grasshopper said—‘Now, don’t ye see
Thar’s mighty few dancers sech ez me—
Sech ez *me!*—Sech ez *ME!*’”

This reminded Si of his own capabilities as a dancer. He rose and began to caper nimbly, executing a series of steps that were singularly swift, spry, and unexpected,—a good deal on the grasshopper's method. His tattered black hat bobbed up and down on his tow head; his brown jeans trousers, so loose on his lean legs, flapped about hilariously; his bare heels flew out right and left; he snapped his fingers to mark the time; now and then he stuck his arms akimbo, and cut what he called the “widgeon-ping.” But his freckled face was as grave as ever, and all the time that he danced he sang:

“In the middle o’ the night the rain kem down,
An’ gin the corn a fraish start out’n the ground,
An’ I thought nex’ day ez I stood in the door,
That sassy bug mus’ be drowned sure!
But thar war Goggle-eyes, peart an’ gay,
Twangin’ an’ a-tunin’ up—‘Now, dance away!
Ye may sarch night an’ day ez a constancy
An’ ye won’t find a fiddler sech ez me!
Sech ez *me!*—Sech ez *ME!*’ ”

As he sank back exhausted upon the ground, a new aspect of the scene caught his attention.

Those blue mountains were purpling—there was an ever-deepening flush in the west. It was close

upon sunset, and while he had wasted the time, the five men to whom his father had sent that stern message forbidding them to come to his house were perhaps on their way thither, with every expectation of a cordial welcome. There might be a row—even a fight—and all because he had loitered.

How he tore out of the brambly woods! How he pounded along the sandy road! But when he reached the settlement close upon nightfall, the storekeeper's wife told him that the men had gone long ago.

"They war powerful special ter git off early," she added, "'kase they wanted ter be thar 'fore Old Daddy drapped off ter sleep. Some o' them foolish, slack-jawed boys ter the store ter-day riled the old man's feelin's, an' they 'lowed ter patch up the peace with him, an' let him an' Jonas know ez they never meant no harm."

This suggestion buoyed up the boy's heart to some degree as he toiled along the "short cut" homeward through the heavy shades of the gloomy woods and the mystic effects of the red rising moon. But he was not altogether without anxiety until, as he drew within sight of the log cabin on the slope of the ravine, he heard Old Daddy piping pacifically to the guests about "my son," and Jonas Creyshaw's jolly laughter.

The moon was golden now; Si could see its brilliant shafts of light strike aslant upon the smooth surface of the cliff that formed the opposite side of Old Daddy's Window. He stopped short in the deep shadow of the more rugged crag. The vines and bushes that draped its many jagged ledges dripped with dew. The boughs of an old oak, which grew close by, swayed gently in the breeze. Hidden by its huge bole, Si cast an apprehensive glance toward the house where his elders sat.

Certainly no one was thinking of him now.

"This air my chance fur that young owl—ef ever," he said to himself.

The owl's nest was in the hollow of the tree. The trunk was far too bulky to admit of climbing, and the lowest branches were well out of the boy's reach. Some thirty feet from the ground, however, one of the boughs touched the crag. By clambering up its rugged, irregular ledges, making a zigzag across its whole breadth to the right and then a similar zigzag to the left, Si might gain a position which would enable him to clutch this bough of the tree. Thence he could scramble along to the owl's stronghold.

He hesitated. He knew his elders would disapprove of so reckless an undertaking as climbing about Old Daddy's Window, for in venturing to-

ward its outer verge, a false step, a crumbling ledge, the snapping of a vine, would fling him down the sheer precipice into the depths below.

His hankering for a pet owl had nevertheless brought him here more than once. It was only yesterday evening—before he had heard of the ghost's appearance, however,—that he had made his last futile attempt.

He looked up doubtfully. "I ain't ez strong ez—ez some folks," he admitted.

"But then, come ter think of it," he argued astutely, "I don't weigh nuthin' sca'cely, an' thar ain't much of me ter hev ter haul up thar."

He flung off his hat, he laid his wiry hands upon the wild grape-vines, he felt with his bare feet for the familiar niches and jagged edges, and up he went, working steadily to the right, across the broad face of the cliff.

Its heavy shadow concealed him from view. Only one ledge, at the extreme verge of the crag, jutted out into the full moonbeams. But this, by reason of the intervening bushes and vines, could not be seen by those who sat in the cabin porch on the slope of the ravine, and he was glad to have light just here, for it was the most perilous point of his enterprise. By deft scrambling, however, he succeeded in getting on the moonlit ledge.

"I clumb like a painter!" he declared triumphantly.

He rested there for a moment before attempting to reach the vines high up on the left hand, which he must grasp in order to draw himself up into the shadowy niche in the rock, and began his zigzag course back again across the face of the cliff to the projecting bough of the tree.

But suddenly, as he still stood motionless on the ledge in the full radiance of the moon, the clamor of frightened voices sounded at the house. Until now he had forgotten all about the ghost. He turned, horror-stricken.

There was the frightful thing, plainly defined against the smooth surface of the opposite cliff—some thirty feet distant—that formed the other side of Old Daddy's Window.

And certainly there are mighty few dancers such as that ghost! It lunged actively toward the precipice. It suddenly dashed wildly back—gyrating continually with singularly nimble feet, flinging wiry arms aloft and maintaining a sinister silence, while the frightened clamor at the house grew ever louder and more shrill.

Several minutes elapsed before Si recognized something peculiarly familiar in the ghost's wiry nimbleness—before he realized that the shadow of

the cliff on which he stood reached across the ravine to the base of the opposite cliff, and that the figure which had caused so much alarm was only his own shadow cast upon its perpendicular surface.

He stopped short in those antics which had been induced by mortal terror; of course, his shadow, too, was still instantly. It stood upon the brink of the precipice which seems the sill of Old Daddy's Window, and showed distinctly on the smooth face of the cliff opposite to him.

He understood, after a moment's reflection, how it was that as he had climbed up on the ledge in the full moonlight his shadow had seemed to rise gradually from the vague depths below the insurmountable precipice.

He sprang nimbly upward to seize the vines that shielded him from the observation of the ghost-seers on the cabin porch, and as he caught them and swung himself suddenly from the moonlit ledge into the gloomy shade, he noticed that his shadow seemed to fling its arms wildly above its head, and disappeared upward.

"That air jes' what dad seen las' night when I war down hyar afore, a-figurin' ter ketch that thar leetle owel," he said to himself when he had reached the tree and sat in a crotch, panting and excited.

After a moment, regardless of the coveted owl, he swung down from branch to branch, dropped easily from the lowest upon the ground, picked up his hat, and prepared to skulk along the "short cut," strike the road, and come home by that route as if he had just returned from the settlement.

"'Kase," he argued sagely, "ef them skeered-ter-death grown folks war ter find out ez I war the *harnt*—I mean ez the *harnt* war *me*—ennyhow," he concluded desperately, "I'd KETCH it—sure!"

So impressed was he with this idea that he discreetly held his tongue.

And from that day to this, Jonas Creyshaw and his friends have been unable to solve the mystery of Old Daddy's Window.

THE DREAM OF MAXEN WLEDIG¹

A WELSH LEGEND

MAXEN WLEDIG was emperor of Rome; and he was a comelier man and a better and a wiser, than any emperor that had been before him. And one day he held a council of kings; and he said to his friends, "I desire to go to-morrow to hunt." And the next day in the morning he set forth with his retinue, and came to the valley of the river that flowed toward Rome. And he hunted through the valley until mid-day. And with him also were two and thirty crowned kings, that were his vassals. Not for the delight of hunting went the emperor with them, but to put himself on equal terms with those kings.

And the sun was high in the sky over their heads, and the heat was great. And sleep came upon Maxen Wledig. And his attendants stood and set up their shields around him upon the shafts of their spears to protect him from the sun, and they placed a gold enameled shield under his head; and so Maxen slept.

And he saw a dream. And this is the dream that

¹ Maxen Wledig is the Emperor Maximus who was in Britain with his army when he obtained the throne, 383 A. D. He is the subject of many Welsh legends.

he saw. He was journeying along the valley of the river toward its source; and he came to the highest mountain in the world. And he thought that the mountain was as high as the sky. And when he came over the mountain, it seemed to him that he went through the fairest and most level regions that man ever yet beheld, on the other side of the mountain. And he saw large and mighty rivers descending from the mountain to the sea, and toward the mouths of the rivers he proceeded. And as he journeyed thus he came to the mouth of the largest river ever seen. And he beheld a great city at the entrance of the river, and a vast castle in the city, and he saw many high towers of various colors in the castle. And he saw a fleet at the mouth of the river, the largest ever seen. And he saw one ship among the fleet; larger was it by far, and fairer, than all the others. Of such part of the ship as he could see above the water, one plank was gilded and the other silvered over. He saw a bridge of the bone of the whale from the ship to the land, and he thought that he went along the bridge, and came into the ship. And a sail was hoisted on the ship, and along the sea and the ocean was it borne. Then it seemed that he came to the fairest island in the whole world, and he traversed the island from sea to sea, even to the farthest shore of the island. Val-

leys he saw, and steeps, and rocks of wondrous height, and rugged precipices. Never yet saw he the like. And thence he beheld an island in the sea, facing this rugged land. And between him and this island was a country of which the plain was as large as the sea, the mountain as vast as the wood. And from the mountain he saw a river that flowed through the land, and fell into the sea. And at the mouth of the river he beheld a castle, the fairest that man ever saw; and the gate of the castle was open, and he went into the castle. And in the castle he saw a fair hall, of which the roof seemed to be all gold; the walls of the hall seemed to be entirely of glittering precious gems, the doors all seemed to be of gold. Golden seats he saw in the hall, and silver tables. And on a seat opposite to him he beheld two auburn-haired youths playing at chess. He saw a silver board for the chess, and golden pieces thereon. The garments of the youths were of jet-black satin; and chaplets of ruddy gold bound their hair, whereon were sparkling jewels of great price, rubies, and gems alternately with imperial stones; buskins of new Cordovan leather on their feet, fastened by slides of red gold.

And beside a pillar in the hall he saw a hoary-headed man in a chair of ivory, with the figures of two eagles of ruddy gold thereon. Bracelets of

gold were upon his arms, and many rings were on his hands, and a golden torque about his neck; and his hair was bound with a golden diadem. He was of powerful aspect. A chessboard of gold was before him, and a rod of gold, and a steel file in his hand. And he was carving out chessmen.

And he saw a maiden sitting before him in a chair of ruddy gold. Not more easy than to gaze upon the sun when brightest was it to look upon her by reason of her beauty. A vest of white silk was upon the maiden, with clasps of red gold at the breast; and a surcoat of gold tissue upon her, and a frontlet of red gold upon her head, and rubies and gems were in the frontlet, alternating with pearls and imperial stones. And a girdle of ruddy gold was around her. She was the fairest sight that man ever beheld.

The maiden arose from her chair before him, and they two sat down together in the chair of gold; and the chair was not less roomy for them both than for the maiden alone. And behold, through the chafing of the dogs at their leashing, and the clashing of the shields as they struck against each other, and the beating together of the shafts of the spears, and the neighing of the horses and their prancing, the emperor awoke.

And when he awoke, nor spirit nor existence was

left him, because of the maiden whom he had seen in his sleep; for the love of the maiden pervaded his whole frame. Then his household spake unto him. "Lord," said they, "is it not past the time for thee to take thy food?" Thereupon the emperor mounted his palfrey, the saddest man that mortal ever saw, and went forth toward Rome.

And thus he was during the space of a week. When they of the household went to drink wine and mead out of golden vessels, he went not with any of them. When they went to listen to songs and tales, he went not with them there; neither could he be persuaded to do anything but sleep. And as often as he slept, he beheld in his dreams the maiden he loved best; but except when he slept he saw nothing of her; for he knew not where in the world she was.

One day the page of the chamber spake unto him; now, although he was page of the chamber, he was king of the Romans. "Lord," said he, "all the people revile thee."

"Wherefore do they revile me?" asked the emperor.

"Because they can get neither message nor answer from thee, as men should have from their lord. This is the cause why thou art spoken evil of."

"Youth," said the emperor, "do thou bring unto

me the wise men of Rome, and I will tell them wherefore I am sorrowful.”

Then the wise men of Rome were brought to the emperor, and he spake to them. “Sages of Rome,” said he, “I have seen a dream. And in the dream I beheld a maiden, and because of the maiden is there neither life, nor spirit, nor existence within me.”

“Lord,” they answered, “since thou judgest us worthy to counsel thee, we will give thee counsel. And this is our counsel: that thou send messengers for three years to the three parts of the world to seek for thy dream. And as thou knowest not what day or what night good news may come to thee, the hope thereof will support thee.”

So the messengers journeyed for the space of a year, wandering about the world, and seeking tidings concerning his dream. But when they came back at the end of the year they knew not one word more than they did the day they set forth. And then was the emperor exceeding sorrowful; for he thought that he should never have tidings of her whom best he loved.

Then spoke the king of the Romans unto the emperor. “Lord,” said he, “go forth to hunt by the way thou didst seem to go, whether it were to the east or to the west.”

So the emperor went forth to the hunt, and he came to the bank of the river. "Behold," said he, "this is where I was when I saw the dream, and I went toward the source of the river westward."

And thereupon thirteen messengers of the emperor's set forth; and before them they saw a high mountain, which seemed to them to touch the sky. Now this was the guise in which the messengers journeyed; one sleeve was on the cap of each of them in front, as a sign that they were messengers, in order that through what hostile land soever they might pass no harm might be done them. And when they were come over this mountain, they beheld vast plains, and large rivers flowing there through. "Behold," said they, "the land which our master saw."

And they went along the mouths of the rivers, until they came to the mighty river which they saw flowing to the sea, and the vast city, and the many-colored high towers in the castle. They saw the largest fleet in the world in the harbor of the river, and one ship that was larger than any of the others. "Behold again," said they, "the dream that our master saw." And in the great ship they crossed the sea, and came to the Island of Britain. And they traversed the island until they came to Snowdon. "Behold," said they, "the rugged land that

our master saw." And they went forward until they saw Anglesey before them, and until they saw Arvon likewise. "Behold," said they, "the land our master saw in his sleep." And they saw Aber Sain, and a castle at the mouth of the river. The portal of the castle saw they open, and into the castle they went, and they saw a hall in the castle. Then said they, "Behold the hall which he saw in his sleep." They went into the hall, and they beheld two youths playing at chess on the golden bench. And they beheld the hoary-headed man beside the pillar, in the ivory chair, carving chessmen. And they beheld the maiden sitting on a chair of ruddy gold.

The messengers bent down upon their knees. "Empress of Rome, all hail!"

"Ha, gentles," said the maiden, "ye bear the seeming of honorable men, and the badge of envoys: what mockery is this ye do to me?"

"We mock thee not, lady; but the emperor of Rome hath seen thee in his sleep, and he has neither life nor spirit left because of thee. Thou shalt have of us therefore the choice, lady,—whether thou wilt go with us and be made empress of Rome, or that the emperor come hither and take thee for his wife?"

"Ha, lords," said the maiden, "I will not deny what ye say, neither will I believe it too well. If

the emperor love me, let him come here to seek me."

And by day and night the messengers hied them back. And when their horses failed, they bought other fresh ones. And when they came to Rome, they saluted the emperor, and asked their boon, which was given to them according as they named it. "We will be thy guides, lord," said they, "over sea and over land, to the place where is the woman whom best thou lovest; for we know her name, and her kindred and her race."

And immediately the emperor set forth with his army. And these men were his guides. Toward the Island of Britain they went over the sea and the deep. And he conquered the island from Beli the son of Manogan, and his sons, and drove them to the sea, and went forward even unto Arvon. And the emperor knew the land when he saw it. And when he beheld the castle of Aber Sain, "Look yonder," said he, "there is the castle wherein I saw the damsel whom I best love." And he went forward into the castle and into the hall, and there he saw Kynan the son of Eudav, and Adeon the son of Eudav, playing at chess. And he saw Eudav the son of Caradawc sitting on a chair of ivory, carving chessmen. And the maiden whom he had beheld in his sleep he saw sitting on a

chair of gold. "Empress of Rome," said he, "all hail!" And the emperor threw his arms about her neck; and she became his bride.

And this dream is called the Dream of Maxen Wledig, emperor of Rome. And here it ends.



GENSERIC

OWEN MEREDITH

GENSERIC, King of the Vandals, who, having laid
waste seven lands,
From Tripolis far as Tangier, from the sea to the
great desert sands,
Was lord of the Moor and the African,—thirsting
anon for new slaughter,
Sail'd out of Carthage, and sail'd o'er the Mediter-
ranean water;
Plunder'd Palermo, seiz'd Sicily, sack'd the Lu-
canian coast,
And paused, and said, laughing, "Where next?"
Then there came to the Vandal a Ghost

From the Shadowy Land that lies hid and unknown
in the Darkness Below.

And answered, "To Rome!"

Said the King to the Ghost, "And whose envoy
art thou?"

Whence com'st thou? and name me his name that
hath sent thee: and say what is thine."

"From far: and His name that hath sent me is
God," the Ghost answered, "and mine
Was Hannibal once, ere thou wast: and the name
that I now have is Fate.

But arise, and be swift, and return. For God
waits, and the moment is late."

And, "I go," said the Vandal. And went.

When at last to the gates he was come,
Loud he knock'd with his fierce iron fist. And full
drowsily answer'd him Rome.

"Who is it that knocketh so loud? Get thee hence.
Let me be. For 'tis late."

"Thou art wanted," cried Genseric. "Open! His
name that hath sent me is Fate,
And mine, who knock late, Retribution."

Rome gave him her glorious things;
The keys she had conquer'd from kingdoms: the
crowns she had wrested from kings:
And Genseric bore them away into Carthage,
avenged thus on Rome;

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And paused, and said, laughing, "Where next?"

And again the Ghost answer'd him, "Home!
For now God doth need thee no longer."

"Where leadest thou me by the hand?"

Cried the King to the Ghost. And the Ghost answer'd, "Into the Shadowy Land."

FRIAR BACON'S BRAZEN HEAD

ABBY SAGE RICHARDSON

IN a vast and ancient room, whose appliances denoted the abode of the scholar and philosopher, sat the learned and famous friar, Roger Bacon. Beside him, a dusty table was thickly strewn with scrolls of parchment, rich with age and erudition, while a large chest, heavily barred and bolted, was filled with other treasures in manuscript, each worth more than its weight in virgin gold.

At the farther end of the room a vast chimney, with smoky furnaces and crucibles, containing crude and half-smelted ores, and all the various properties of the alchemist, occupied one side of the apartment. In one corner, a huge iron mortar, shielded by screens of metal from contact with any spark which might fly from the furnaces, was filled with an inodorous mixture of brimstone and saltpeter, and a black dust which looked like powdered charcoal. Everywhere, on floor and table, stood such rude instruments to aid in chemistry and astronomy as the time afforded, while all about were such evidences of work and study as made the place

seem as much like the workshop of the artisan as the library of the scholar.

Stretched across the upper end of the apartment, a heavy green curtain fell in broken folds over some object which it was intended to conceal. Before this curtain sat the great necromancer, of whose art all England spoke in whispered wonder, and with bated breath, "the learned Friar Bacon of Oxford."

No longer an inmate of the college from whose walls his suspected magic had caused him to be driven forth, he dwelt solitary among the surrounding rustics who feared and shunned him, and in secret wrought those mysterious works which made him dreaded among men.

He was now only a little past middle life, a man of commanding figure and noble head, which seemed heavy with the weight of knowledge it carried, and now dropped wearily upon his hands as he sat steeped in thought.

His reverie was broken by the entrance of his servant Miles, the only retainer he could keep about him, a half-witted, faithful fellow, who clung gratefully to the hand which fed him.

"I cry you mercy, good master," said Miles hastily entering, "but I could not stay upon ceremony. A lord is without the door, asking entrance

to you. It is a fellow in a scarlet coat, and wonderful fine otherwise. He declares that he is from Oxford, and will have speech with you. And although I said nobody could enter, he will come in, whether I will or no. At which I, fearing he might be the Evil One himself, took to my heels to tell thee about him."

"Let him come in," answered the friar, roused by the servant's long speech from his deep abstraction. "It is Clement, the cardinal, the Pope's legate to England. Stay, Miles, throw a cloth over the pile of manuscripts yonder. Pull out that curtain straight. Now give me the book of the Gospels. It is enough. Show the cardinal hither."

A moment later, and the Cardinal Clement, himself the next successor to the papal throne, entered the apartment.

"Well, friar, at last we have found your secret hiding-place. It is no easy journey hither, and the road is as hard and narrow as that which leads to Paradise."

"I am sorry for the trouble your lordship took in coming, and should have been happy if it might have been spared you."

"Which means, so I take it, good friar, that you are not glad at my coming. But, believe me, I come with no evil intent, nor for anything except

friendship. I know how they have treated thee at Oxford, and in good earnest I have been always sorry for it. Learning is not so plenty, that it should be put down; and from what I know of thy wonderful inventions, they are not those that the Devil teaches his followers, but always of good service to the cause of Truth and the true Church. I pray thee do not distrust my motive. I come in friendly guise, unattended as thou seest, and with no desire but to be instructed in some of thy magic discoveries, and see what they may avail to science."

"My discoveries are naught," answered the friar, still keeping up the reserved manner he had worn since the entrance of his visitor. "Thou hast heard of the magic powder which has so frightened the learned magnates of the college that they drove me outside their walls. It is but a composition of simple substances, which, without any magic art, when touched with a spark, will give forth a semblance of lightning and thunder. If thou wishest, I can, in a few minutes, show thee the secret of it."

"No, no, good friar," returned the cardinal, shrinking away a little uneasily from the mortar in the corner, which Bacon approached. "I trust thy word, and I am no fool to believe stories of any wizard's craft. But there is another matter of which I come to inquire of thee. Thou hast a huge

head, they tell me, of which thou makest a familiar, that tells thee strange secrets, and foretells events that can affect the fate of nations. Tell me of this. On the faith of a priest and a gentleman, I ask but for love of science. And ” (here the priest’s voice sank lower) “ thou hast heard that Pope Urban grows feeble. It is in all men’s mouths in Rome, that the cardinal legate of England will be the next high pontiff of the Church. I trust thy honor in telling this, and tell thee also, that if Clement of Narbonne be made the Holy Father of the Church, it will be his first mission to do away with the narrow bigotry regarding science, and with his own royal hand confer honors on those who make Learning their mistress. Now do you trust my friendship, good Friar Bacon? ”

“ My lord cardinal, I do trust you,” answered Bacon, whose keen eye had closely scanned the features of the priest while he had spoken. “ But it becometh us men of letters to be mistrustful. We remember that many who were not heretics have been invited into the presence of the Inquisition, and have not returned thence. But I trust your word, and I will betray to you my mystery.”

Rising hastily, the friar drew aside the green curtain which had hitherto concealed some object from the view. The cardinal turned to face it, and then

stepped back, awestruck at the sight which the withdrawing of the drapery revealed. Placed on a rude pedestal which stood several feet above the floor, stood a massive brazen head, with grand, impassive face, and an expression of such dignified grandeur, such commanding repose, that it was as if the haughty features of some Grecian god had been revealed to the awestruck gaze of the cardinal.

As he gazed, from the deep-set but luminous eyes, true Jovine lightning seemed to issue, and a deep rumbling sound like distant thunder shook the floor on which they stood.

The legate involuntarily crossed himself, and then, looking at Bacon, who slowly dropped the curtain which concealed the head, he asked in a half-whisper:

“Is this thy work?”

“Mine, and one other cherished brother in science, Master Bungay of Oxford,” answered the monk. “This is the slow work of seven years, my lord cardinal, and, as thou mayst guess, wrought for no common purpose. This head is formed with utmost care and skill by direction which I found writ out in parchments more ancient than the Church we worship. If my work have no flaw, when all is done this head will speak, and tell me

how I may encircle my England with a wall of brass, which now and hereafter will hold her invulnerable to the assaults of all enemies. Think of such a feat," said Bacon, his face glowing with enthusiasm. "Is it not worth my work to leave my name on such a monument to my country's greatness?"

"Truly, good friar," answered Clement, a little coldly, "I doubt whether it be for the good of our Mother Church, and her power over the nations which are gathered under her wings, to have one of her children so walled about. But for thy good intentions, I do not doubt them, and for thy learning I have nothing but respect. No doubt, thy brazen head, if perchance it should ever speak, will tell thee other wondrous things. Thou shalt not repent if thou lettest me have such advantage as may come of its teachings. But I confess, I should not like to see this little island so girt with brass. Suppose she might then take it into her head to defy papal authority, as, armed with such power, she might."

"You reckon impossibilities, my lord," exclaimed Bacon. "In so impious a case, the wall, which should guard England from enemies, would topple down to crush her."

"I pray thee, put such a charm as that into thy

conjurations, good friar," said Clement, rising to depart. "But whatever betide, count on me as thy patron, and remember that in telling thee of my ambition, I have left my secret in thy keeping, as thine lies in my hands. Fare thee well, my son; peace remain with thee." And with a gesture of blessing, the cardinal left the apartment.

It was night, and in Friar Bacon's study the faint gleam of one solitary rush-light made the deep shadows which lurked in every corner more apparent and more awful. The curtains which screened the head were withdrawn, and it loomed up in the dimness to a gigantic size. Bending over the table on which the little candle burned, with a manuscript spread out before him, sat Friar Bacon, his face worn and pinched as of one who suffers for want of repose and proper nourishment.

The marks upon the hour-glass beside him showed that it had been turned six times since sunset, and the sands of the last hour before midnight were swiftly slipping through the glass. Ever and anon the friar took up the little timekeeper, and shook it gently, as if to hasten the passage of the slow hours, and often, amid his watching and study, his head sank lower and lower toward the table, as if tired Nature would assert her rights, and steep him in

the sweet oblivion of sleep, against his own powerful will.

All at once he started up, and striking a cymbal with a little silver hammer, he waited till the summons was answered by his servant Miles, who came in sleepily rubbing his eyes, that he might be sufficiently awake to answer his master.

The friar sat earnestly regarding Miles, till he had rubbed and stretched himself awake.

"Are you ready to do me a great service, Miles?" he asked at length, when the serving-man's attention had been riveted by his own fixed gaze.

"Anything which thou canst ask, good master," returned Miles. "Except it be to go on errands to the Evil One. That I would rather excuse myself from."

"Such service as I require has no such conditions. Listen, Miles. Thou seest the head yonder?"

Miles looked cautiously over his shoulder at the awful presence, and nodded assent.

"Thou knowest that for nine and thirty nights Friar Bungay and I have watched, by day and night, waiting to hear that which soon or late its lips are sure to utter. If it should speak, and its speech be unheeded, woe betide the makers, and woe betide our hopes of encircling our fair country

with a wall which will make her forever invincible. To-night I have waited for Friar Bungay, till my eyelids are heavy, and I would fain take a brief rest. But I dare not leave the head unguarded, lest in my sleep it should utter that which I must heed. Can I trust you to wait here in my sleep, and if the head gives signs of speech, to wake me suddenly, that I may follow its magical instruction? It is but for an hour or two, and then I will again resume my watch."

"I will watch here as bravely as if I never knew what fear meant, good master," answered Miles. "I warrant the head will do me no harm, and I will repeat so many Aves and Paters that not a foul fiend will venture to come near me. So good-night and to sleep. Let me but get my trusty stave, which stands without, that I may arm myself, if any one enter to do me any hurt; and in a trice I will be here to guard thy wondrous handiwork."

So saying, Miles brought in a huge bludgeon, which he carried on his shoulder in true soldierly fashion. The friar rose, and pouring a small glass of strong liquor from a flask, he handed it to Miles, saying,—“Drink that. It will keep thee from growing timorous in thy watch. Remember that on thy wakefulness rest all my hopes, and that a moment's slumber may wreck them. Good-night

and Benedicite." Thus saying, the friar, who could hardly speak from weariness, passed through the door which led into a small inner chamber, where he slept.

Miles was doubly brave from the effect of the potent liquor the friar had given him, which now seemed to course through his veins like a swift serpent of flame. He glanced defiantly at the head, which hitherto he had only regarded with profound awe. Withdrawing himself as far as possible from the mortar in which he knew his master was wont to mix the terrible powder, whose production had branded him as one in league with Satan, he sat down near the brazen image to wait for any event which would break up the tedium of his watch.

The minutes before midnight moved slowly on, and the last sands were dropping through the glass. Already, in the adjoining chamber, the heavy breathing of the friar told how quickly sleep had seized upon his weary senses.

"Sleep away, good master," said Miles approvingly. "I will take as good care of matters here as if thou wert broad awake. For my own part, I see little sense in so much watching of a head, which for aught we know was made out of an old kettle or a pair of battered helmets. As for my master, wise as he is, he must have a crack in his head-piece;

else, instead of starving me and himself on bread-crusts and spring-water, he would call to his aid some of the brave spirits his art can command, and order good smoking-hot meats, and wine as good as the king uses, and have rich raiment and soft beds, instead of such poor accommodation as he keeps now. If thou canst tell him anything to better his conditions, good Master Brazen-Pate," went on Miles, looking up at the gloomy features, which in the dim light seemed to frown upon him, "do so, and I'll set thee up for an oracle."

As he spoke these last words, a low sound of thunder muttered through the room, and shook gently the pedestal on which the Head rested. A single flash of light lit up the immovable features for one brief instant, and from the lips, a voice scarcely louder than a whisper, yet distinctly audible, uttered the words:

"TIME IS!"

"Is that the beginning of your speech, old Brazen-Nose?" said Miles, coolly regarding the Head as if it were the most natural thing in the world for it to speak thus. "Go on, I pray thee, and let me hear if thou intendest to say anything worth noting. I will not wake my master for so slight a matter as that thou hast just announced.

'*Time is,*' forsooth! as if that would be news to any such scholar as Friar Bacon. Thou hadst best speak sense if thou wouldst have him listen to thee."

Again the thunder muttered, but louder than at first; again the lightning gleamed over the impassive features, and the voice murmured:

"TIME WAS!"

"On my life," said Miles, scornfully, "to think that my master and his friend should spend seven good years in making a head which says no more wonderful thing than any fishmonger could tell us. '*Time was!*' I am but a fool, and I hope I know as much as that. Why not say something in Greek or Latin, or any of the learned tongues that Master Bacon knows as well as he knows his breviary? Or, if thou canst speak nothing but common English, tell us something more strange than this. Dost think I shall wake up my master to no better entertainment of conversation than thou hast offered him? Out upon thee for a braggart, that promisest by thy looks more than thy tongue can ever perform for thee."

While he was speaking, a sudden light lit up the Head with a brightness like that of day. The terrible features wore a frown so dreadful that the glance struck dismay to the heart of the swagger-

ing Miles. As he stood motionless, with awful accent and in a voice of thunder, the Head cried out:

“TIME IS PAST!”

Then came a lightning flash so vivid that the serving-man fell prone to earth, and with a fearful crash the grand Head fell, a shattered mass of fragments, without shape or semblance.

Amidst the dire noise Friar Bacon started up and rushed to his doorway. At his feet was the work of seven years a blasted ruin. Groveling among the fragments lay the wretched Miles, uttering loud screams of fear.

“Peace, fool!” commanded the friar, raising him to his feet. “Silence! and tell me how this happened. Did the Head speak?”

“Aye, sir, he spake,” answered Miles, blubbering loudly. “But he said naught worth noting. Didst thou not say it would utter strange words of learning? Yet it said at first only two words.”

“What words?”

“Why, at first it said, ‘Time is,’ and I, knowing that was no news of consequence, waited for something better before I woke thee. Again it said, ‘Time was,’ and then with a loud cry it said, ‘Time is past,’ and toppled over, giving my head many a hard bump with the fragments.”

“Wretch! idiot, villain!” cried the friar, seizing the frightened man, as if he would have strangled him. “Thy foolishness has cost me the work of years, the hopes of a lifetime. No words can reveal what thy idiocy has lost me. But go, leave my sight, miserable vagabond! I could kill myself in shame for having trusted thee.” And, releasing his hold of Miles, the friar sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands.

“It is the last,” he murmured. “Henceforth I bid farewell to magic. From this moment I will close my study and burn my books. Hereafter only to religion will I devote myself, and dying I shall leave not even my poor name to add to my country’s glory.”

THE MYSTERY OF CRO-A-TÀN

A. D. 1587

MARGARET J. PRESTON

I

THE home-bound ships stood out to sea,
And on the island's marge
Sir Richard¹ waited restlessly
To step into the barge.

“The Governor tarrieth long,” he chode,
“As he were loath to go:
With food before and want behind,
There should be haste, I trow.”

Even as he spake the Governor came:—
“Nay, fret not, for the men
Have held me back with frantic let,
To have them home again.

“The women weep:—‘Ay, ay, the ships
Will come again (he saith)
Before the May;—before the May
We shall have starved to death!’

¹ The first English colony was sent to America by Sir Walter Raleigh under the auspices of Sir Richard Grenville. The settlement was made on Roanoke Island in Albemarle Sound.

“ I’ve sworn return by God’s dear leave,
I’ve vowed by Court and Crown,
Nor yet appeased them. Comrade, thou,
Mayhap, canst soothe them down.”

Sir Richard loosed his helm, and stretched
Impatient hands abroad:—

“ Have ye no trust in man? ” he cried,
“ Have ye no faith in God?

“ Your Governor goes, as needs he must,
To bear through royal grace,
Hither, such food-supply that want
May never blench a face.

“ Of freest choice ye willed to leave
Whatso ye had of ease;
For neither stress of liege nor law
Hath forced you over seas.

“ Your Governor leaves fair hostages
As costliest pledge of care,—
His daughter yonder, and her child,
The child Virginia Dare.”¹

¹ Virginia Dare, the granddaughter of Governor Whyte, was the first English child born in America.

“Come hither, little sweetheart! So!
Thou’lt be the first, I ween,
To bend the knee, and send through me
Thy birthland’s virgin fealty
Unto its Virgin Queen.

“And now, good folk, for my commands:
If ye are fain to roam
Beyond this island’s narrow bounds,
To seek elsewhere a home;—

“Upon some pine-tree’s smoothen trunk
Score deep the Indian name
Of tribe or village where ye haunt,
That we may read the same.

“And if ye leave your haven here
Through dire distress or loss,
Cut deep within the wood above
The symbol of the cross.

“And now on my good blade, I swear,
And seal it with this sign,
That if the fleet that sails to-day
Return not hither by the May,
The fault shall not be mine!”

II

The breath of spring was on the sea;
Anon the Governor stepped
His good ship's deck right merrily,—
His promise had been kept.

“ See, see! the coast-line comes in view! ”
He heard the mariners shout,—
“ We'll drop our anchors in the Sound
Before a star is out! ”

“ Now God be praised! ” he inly breathed,
“ Who saves from all that harms;
The morrow morn my pretty ones
Will rest within my arms.”

At dawn of day they moored their ships,
And dared the breakers' roar:
What meant it? Not a man was there
To welcome them ashore!

They sprang to find the cabins rude:
The quick green sedge had thrown
Its knotted web o'er every door,
And climbed the chimney-stone.

The spring was choked with winter's leaves,
And feebly gurgled on;
And from the pathway, strewn with rack,
All trace of feet was gone.

Their fingers thrid the matted grass,
If there, perchance, a mound
Unseen might heave the broken turf;
But not a grave was found.

They beat the tangled cypress swamp,
If haply in despair
They might have strayed into its glade,
But found no vestige there.

"The pine! the pine!" the Governor groaned;
And there each staring man
Read in a maze, one single word,
Deep carven,—Cro-A-Tàn!

But cut above, no cross, no sign,
No symbol of distress;
Naught else beside that mystic line
Within the wilderness.

And where and what was "Cro-a-tàn"?
But not an answer came;
And none of all who read it there
Had ever heard the name.

The Governor drew his jerkin sleeve
Across his misty eyes:

“Some land, may be, of savagery
Beyond the coast that lies;

“And skulking there the wily foe
In ambush may have lain;
God’s mercy! Could such sweetest heads
Lie scalped among the slain?

“O daughter! daughter! with the thought
My harrowed brain is wild!
Up with the anchors! I must find
The mother and the child!”

They scoured the mainland near and far:
The search no tidings brought;
Till ’mid a forest’s dusky tribe
They heard the name they sought.

The kindly natives came with gifts
Of corn and slaughtered deer:
What room for savage treachery
Or foul suspicion here?

Unhindered of a chief or brave,
They searched the wigwam through;
But neither lance nor helm nor spear,
Nor shred of child’s nor woman’s gear,
Could furnish forth a clue.

278 *More Mystery Tales for Boys and Girls*

How could a hundred souls be caught
Straight out of life, nor find
Device through which to mark their fate,
Or leave some hint behind?

Had winter's ocean inland rolled
An eagle's deadly spray,
That overwhelmed the island's breadth,
And swept them all away?

In vain, in vain, their heart-sick search!
No tidings reached them more;
No record save that silent word
Upon that silent shore.

The mystery rests a mystery still,
Unsolved of mortal man:
Sphinx-like untold, the ages hold
The tale of Cro-A-Tàn!



HOWE'S MASQUERADE

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

AT one of the entertainments given at the Province House, during the latter part of the siege of Boston, there passed a scene which has never yet been satisfactorily explained. The officers of the British army, and the loyal gentry of the province, most of whom were collected within the beleaguered town, had been invited to a masked ball; for it was the policy of Sir William Howe to hide the distress and danger of the period, and the desperate aspect of the siege, under an ostentation of festivity. The spectacle of this evening, if the oldest members of

the provincial court circle might be believed, was the most gay and gorgeous affair that had occurred in the annals of the government. The brilliantly-lighted apartments were thronged with figures that seemed to have stepped from the dark canvas of historic portraits, or to have flitted forth from the magic pages of romance, or at least to have flown hither from one of the London theatres, without a change of garments. Steeled knights of the Conquest, bearded statesmen of Queen Elizabeth, and high-ruffled ladies of her court, were mingled with characters of comedy, such as a party-colored Merry Andrew, jingling his cap and bells; a Falstaff, almost as provocative of laughter as his prototype; and a Don Quixote, with a bean-pole for a lance, and a pot-lid for a shield.

But the broadest merriment was excited by a group of figures ridiculously dressed in old regimentals, which seemed to have been purchased at a military rag fair, or pilfered from some receptacle of the cast-off clothes of both the French and British armies. Portions of their attire had probably been worn at the siege of Louisburg, and the coats of most recent cut might have been rent and tattered by sword, ball, or bayonet, as long ago as Wolfe's victory. One of these worthies—a tall, lank figure, brandishing a rusty sword of immense

longitude—purported to be no less a personage than General George Washington; and the other principal officers of the American army, such as Gates, Lee, Putnam, Schuyler, Ward and Heath, were represented by similar scarecrows. An interview in the mock-heroic style, between the rebel warriors and the British commander-in-chief, was received with immense applause, which came loudest of all from the loyalists of the colony. There was one of the guests, however, who stood apart, eyeing these antics sternly and scornfully, at once with a frown and a bitter smile.

It was an old man, formerly of high station and great repute in the province, and who had been a very famous soldier in his day. Some surprise had been expressed that a person of Colonel Joliffe's known Whig principles, though now too old to take an active part in the contest, should have remained in Boston during the siege, and especially that he should consent to show himself in the mansion of Sir William Howe. But thither he had come, with a fair granddaughter under his arm; and there, amid all the mirth and buffoonery, stood this stern old figure, the best sustained character in the masquerade, because so well representing the antique spirit of his native land. The other guests affirmed that Colonel Joliffe's black puritanical scowl threw

a shadow round about him; although in spite of his sombre influence their gaiety continued to blaze higher, like—(an ominous comparison)—the flickering brilliancy of a lamp which has but a little while to burn. Eleven strokes, full half an hour ago, had pealed from the clock of the Old South, when a rumor was circulated among the company that some new spectacle or pageant was about to be exhibited, which should put a fitting close to the splendid festivities of the night.

“What new jest has your Excellency in hand?” asked the Rev. Mather Byles, whose Presbyterian scruples had not kept him from the entertainment. “Trust me, sir, I have already laughed more than beseems my cloth at your Homeric confabulation with yonder ragamuffin General of the rebels. One other such fit of merriment, and I must throw off my clerical wig and band.”

“Not so, good Doctor Byles,” answered Sir William Howe; “if mirth were a crime, you had never gained your doctorate in divinity. As to this new foolery, I know no more about it than yourself; perhaps not so much. Honestly now, Doctor, have you not stirred up the sober brains of some of your countrymen to enact a scene in our masquerade?”

“Perhaps,” slyly remarked the granddaughter of Colonel Joliffe, whose high spirit had been stung

by many taunts against New England,—“ perhaps we are to have a mask of allegorical figures. Victory, with trophies from Lexington and Bunker Hill—Plenty, with her overflowing horn, to typify the present abundance in this good town—and Glory, with a wreath for his Excellency's brow.”

Sir William Howe smiled at words which he would have answered with one of his darkest frowns had they been uttered by lips that wore a beard. He was spared the necessity of a retort, by a singular interruption. A sound of music was heard without the house, as if proceeding from a full band of military instruments stationed in the street, playing not such a festal strain as was suited to the occasion, but a slow funeral march. The drums appeared to be muffled, and the trumpets poured forth a wailing breath, which at once hushed the merriment of the auditors, filling all with wonder, and some with apprehension. The idea occurred to many that either the funeral procession of some great personage had halted in front of the Province House, or that a corpse, in a velvet-covered and gorgeously-decorated coffin, was about to be borne from the portal. After listening a moment, Sir William Howe called, in a stern voice, to the leader of the musicians, who had hitherto enlivened the entertainment with gay and lightsome melodies.

The man was drum-major to one of the British regiments.

“Dighton,” demanded the general, “what means this foolery? Bid your band silence that dead march—or, by my word, they shall have sufficient cause for their lugubrious strains! Silence it, sirrah!”

“Please, your honor,” answered the drum-major, whose rubicund visage had lost all its color, “the fault is none of mine. I and my band are all here together, and I question whether there be a man of us that could play that march without book. I never heard it but once before, and that was at the funeral of his late Majesty, King George the Second.”

“Well, well!” said Sir William Howe, recovering his composure—“it is the prelude to some masquerading antic. Let it pass.”

A figure now presented itself, but among the many fantastic masks that were dispersed through the apartments none could tell precisely from whence it came. It was a man in an old-fashioned dress of black serge, and having the aspect of a steward or principal domestic in the household of a nobleman or great English landholder. This figure advanced to the outer door of the mansion, and throwing both its leaves wide open, withdrew a lit-

tle to one side and looked back toward the grand staircase as if expecting some person to descend. At the same time the music in the street sounded a loud and doleful summons. The eyes of Sir William Howe and his guests being directed to the staircase, there appeared, on the uppermost landing-place that was discernible from the bottom, several personages descending toward the door. The foremost was a man of stern visage, wearing a steeple-crowned hat and a skull-cap beneath it, a dark cloak, and huge wrinkled boots that came half way up his legs. Under his arm was a rolled-up banner, which seemed to be the banner of England, but strangely rent and torn; he had a sword in his right hand, and grasped a Bible in his left. The next figure was of milder aspect, yet full of dignity, wearing a broad ruff, over which descended a beard, a gown of wrought velvet, and a doublet and hose of black satin. He carried a roll of manuscript in his hand. Close behind these two came a young man of very striking countenance and demeanor, with deep thought and contemplation on his brow, and perhaps a flash of enthusiasm in his eye. His garb, like that of his predecessors, was of an antique fashion, and there was a stain of blood upon his ruff. In the same group with these there were three or four others, all men of dignity and evident

command, and bearing themselves like personages who were accustomed to the gaze of the multitude. It was the idea of the beholders that these figures went to join the mysterious funeral that had halted in front of the Province House; yet that supposition seemed to be contradicted by the air of triumph with which they waved their hands, as they crossed the threshold and vanished through the portal.

“In the devil’s name what is this?” muttered Sir William Howe to a gentleman beside him; “a procession of the regicide judges of King Charles the martyr?”

“These,” said Colonel Joliffe, breaking silence almost for the first time that evening,—“these, if I interpret them aright, are the Puritan governors—the rulers of the old original Democracy of Massachusetts. Endicott, with the banner from which he had torn the symbol of subjection, and Winthrop, and Sir Henry Vane, and Dudley, Haynes, Bellingham, and Leverett.”

“Why had that young man a stain of blood upon his ruff?” asked Miss Joliffe.

“Because, in after years,” answered her grandfather, “he laid down the wisest head in England upon the block for the principles of liberty.”

“Will not your Excellency order out the guard?” whispered Lord Percy, who, with other

British officers, had now assembled round the General. "There may be a plot under this mummary."

"Tush! we have nothing to fear," carelessly replied Sir William Howe. "There can be no worse treason in the matter than a jest, and that somewhat of the dullest. Even were it a sharp and bitter one, our best policy would be to laugh it off. See—here come more of these gentry."

Another group of characters had now partly descended the staircase. The first was a venerable and white-bearded patriarch, who cautiously felt his way downward with a staff. Treading hastily behind him, and stretching forth his gauntleted hand as if to grasp the old man's shoulder, came a tall, soldier-like figure, equipped with a plumed cap of steel, a bright breastplate, and a long sword, which rattled against the stairs. Next was seen a stout man, dressed in rich and courtly attire, but not of courtly demeanor; his gait had the swinging motion of a seaman's walk, and chancing to stumble on the staircase, he suddenly grew wrathful, and was heard to mutter an oath. He was followed by a noble-looking personage in a curled wig, such as are represented in the portraits of Queen Anne's time and earlier; and the breast of his coat was decorated with an embroidered star. While advancing to the door, he bowed to the right hand and

to the left, in a very gracious and insinuating style; but as he crossed the threshold, unlike the early Puritan governors, he seemed to wring his hands with sorrow.

“Prithee, play the part of chorus, good Doctor Byles,” said Sir William Howe. “What worthies are these?”

“If it please your Excellency, they lived somewhat before my day,” answered the doctor, “but doubtless our friend, the Colonel, has been hand and glove with them.”

“Their living faces I never looked upon,” said Colonel Joliffe, gravely; “although I have spoken face to face with many rulers of this land, and shall greet yet another with an old man’s blessing ere I die. But we talk of these figures. I take the venerable patriarch to be Bradstreet, the last of the Puritans, who was governor at ninety or thereabouts. The next is Sir Edmund Andros, a tyrant, as any New England schoolboy will tell you; and therefore the people cast him down from his high seat into a dungeon. Then comes Sir William Phipps, shepherd, cooper, sea-captain and governor—may many of his countrymen rise as high from as low an origin! Lastly, you saw the gracious Earl of Bellamont, who ruled us under King William.”

“But what is the meaning of it all?” asked Lord Percy.

“Now, were I a rebel,” said Miss Joliffe, half aloud, “I might fancy that the ghosts of these ancient governors had been summoned to form the funeral procession of royal authority in New England.”

Several other figures were now seen at the turn of the staircase. The one in advance had a thoughtful, anxious, and somewhat crafty expression of face, and in spite of his loftiness of manner, which was evidently the result both of an ambitious spirit and of long continuance in high stations, he seemed not incapable of cringing to a greater than himself. A few steps behind came an officer in a scarlet and embroidered uniform, cut in a fashion old enough to have been worn by the Duke of Marlborough. His nose had a rubicund tinge, which, together with the twinkle of his eye, might have marked him as a lover of the wine cup and good fellowship; notwithstanding which tokens he appeared ill at ease, and often glanced around him as if apprehensive of some secret mischief. Next came a portly gentleman, wearing a coat of shaggy cloth, lined with silken velvet; he had sense, shrewdness, and humor in his face, and a folio volume under his arm; but his aspect was that of a man vexed and tormented

beyond all patience, and harassed almost to death. He went hastily down, and was followed by a dignified person, dressed in a purple velvet suit, with very rich embroidery; his demeanor would have possessed much stateliness, only that a grievous fit of the gout compelled him to hobble from stair to stair, with contortions of face and body. When Doctor Byles beheld this figure on the staircase, he shivered as with an ague, but continued to watch him steadfastly, until the gouty gentleman had reached the threshold, made a gesture of anguish and despair, and vanished into the outer gloom, whither the funeral music summoned him.

“Governor Belcher!—my old patron!—in his very shape and dress!” gasped Doctor Byles. “This is an awful mockery!”

“A tedious foolery, rather,” said Sir William Howe, with an air of indifference. “But who were the three that preceded him?”

“Governor Dudley, a cunning politician—yet his craft once brought him to a prison,” replied Colonel Joliffe. “Governor Shute, formerly a Colonel under Marlborough, and whom the people frightened out of the province; and learned Governor Burnet, whom the legislature tormented into a mortal fever.”

“Methinks they were miserable men, these royal

governors of Massachusetts," observed Miss Joliffe. "Heavens, how dim the light grows!"

It was certainly a fact that the large lamp which illuminated the staircase now burned dim and duskily; so that several figures, which passed hastily down the stairs and went forth from the porch, appeared rather like shadows than persons of fleshly substance. Sir William Howe and his guests stood at the doors of the contiguous apartments, watching the progress of this singular pageant, with various emotions of anger, contempt, or half-acknowledged fear, but still with an anxious curiosity. The shapes which now seemed hastening to join the mysterious procession were recognized rather by striking peculiarities of dress, or broad characteristics of manner, than by any perceptible resemblance of features to their prototypes. Their faces, indeed, were invariably kept in deep shadow. But Doctor Byles, and other gentlemen who had long been familiar with the successive rulers of the province, were heard to whisper the names of Shirley, of Pownall, of Sir Francis Bernard, and of the well-remembered Hutchinson; thereby confessing that the actors, whoever they might be, in this spectral march of governors, had succeeded in putting on some distant portraiture of the real personages. As they vanished from the door, still did these

shadows toss their arms into the gloom of night, with a dread expression of woe. Following the mimic representative of Hutchinson came a military figure, holding before his face the cocked hat which he had taken from his powdered head; but his epaulettes and other insignia of rank were those of a general officer, and something in his mien reminded the beholders of one who had recently been master of the Province House, and chief of all the land.

“The shape of Gage, as true as in a looking-glass,” exclaimed Lord Percy, turning pale.

“No, surely,” cried Miss Joliffe, laughing hysterically; “it could not be Gage, or Sir William would have greeted his old comrade in arms! Perhaps he will not suffer the next to pass unchallenged.”

“Of that be assured, young lady,” answered Sir William Howe, fixing his eyes, with a very marked expression, upon the immovable visage of her grandfather. “I have long enough delayed to pay the ceremonies of a host to these departing guests. The next that takes his leave shall receive due courtesy.”

A wild and dreary burst of music came through the open door. It seemed as if the procession, which had been gradually filling up its ranks, were

now about to move, and that this loud peal of the wailing trumpets, and roll of the muffled drums, were a call to some loiterer to make haste. Many eyes, by an irresistible impulse, were turned upon Sir William Howe, as if it were he whom the dreary music summoned to the funeral of departed power.

“See!—here comes the last!” whispered Miss Joliffe, pointing her tremulous finger to the staircase.

A figure had come into view as if descending the stairs; although so dusky was the region whence it emerged, some of the spectators fancied that they had seen this human shape suddenly moulding itself amid the gloom. Downward the figure came, with a stately and martial tread, and reaching the lowest stair was observed to be a tall man, booted and wrapped in a military cloak, which was drawn up around the face so as to meet the flapped brim of a laced hat. The features, therefore, were completely hidden. But the British officers deemed that they had seen that military cloak before, and even recognized the frayed embroidery on the collar, as well as the gilded scabbard of a sword which protruded from the folds of the cloak, and glittered in a vivid gleam of light. Apart from these trifling particulars, there were characteristics of gait and

bearing which impelled the wondering guests to glance from the shrouded figure to Sir William Howe, as if to satisfy themselves that their host had not suddenly vanished from the midst of them.

With a dark flush of wrath upon his brow they saw the General draw his sword and advance to meet the figure in the cloak before the latter had stepped one pace upon the floor.

“Villain, unmuffle yourself!” cried he. “You pass no farther!”

The figure, without blenching a hair’s breadth from the sword which was pointed at his breast, made a solemn pause and lowered the cape of the cloak from about his face, yet not sufficiently for the spectators to catch a glimpse of it. But Sir William Howe had evidently seen enough. The sternness of his countenance gave place to a look of wild amazement, if not horror, while he recoiled several steps from the figure, and let fall his sword upon the floor. The martial shape again drew the cloak about his features and passed on; but reaching the threshold, with his back toward the spectators, he was seen to stamp his foot and shake his clinched hands in the air. It was afterward affirmed that Sir William Howe had repeated that selfsame gesture of rage and sorrow, when, for the

last time, and as the last royal governor, he passed through the portal of the Province House.

“Hark!—the procession moves,” said Miss Joliffe.

The music was dying away along the street, and its dismal strains were mingled with the knell of midnight from the steeple of the Old South, and with the roar of artillery, which announced that the beleaguering army of Washington had intrenched itself upon a nearer height than before. As the deep boom of the cannon smote upon his ear, Colonel Joliffe raised himself to the full height of his aged form, and smiled sternly on the British general.

“Would your Excellency inquire further into the mystery of the pageant?” said he.

“Take care of your gray head!” cried Sir William Howe, fiercely, though with a quivering lip. “It has stood too long on a traitor’s shoulders!”

“You must make haste to chop it off, then,” calmly replied the Colonel; “for a few hours longer, and not all the power of Sir William Howe, nor of his master, shall cause one of these gray hairs to fall. The empire of Britain in this ancient province is at its last gasp to-night;—almost while I speak it is a dead corpse;—and methinks the

shadows of the old governors are fit mourners at its funeral!"

With these words Colonel Joliffe threw on his cloak, and drawing his granddaughter's arm within his own, retired from the last festival that a British ruler ever held in the old province of Massachusetts Bay. It was supposed that the Colonel and the young lady possessed some secret intelligence in regard to the mysterious pageant of that night. However this might be, such knowledge has never become general. The actors in the scene have vanished into deeper obscurity than even that wild Indian band who scattered the cargoes of the tea ships on the waves, and gained a place in history, yet left no names. But superstition, among other legends of this mansion, repeats the wondrous tale, that on the anniversary night of Britain's discomfiture the ghosts of the ancient governors of Massachusetts still glide through the portal of the Province House. And last of all, comes a figure shrouded in a military cloak, tossing his clinched hands into the air, and stamping his iron-shod boots upon the broad freestone steps, with a semblance of feverish despair, but without the sound of a foot-tramp.

THE ABBAYE DE CÉRISY¹

MARY LOUISA MOLESWORTH

IN the spring of the year 1889 two ladies were seated together one afternoon talking comfortably, as they sipped their "five-o'clock tea." Five-o'clock tea is, or was, at least, a thoroughly English institution, but it is no longer unknown to our neighbors across the Channel. And a glance—a glance of the slightest and shortest, would have shown any one that this special refecton was not being enjoyed in an English drawing-room or boudoir.

The room was small, oblong in shape, the whole of one end being occupied by a rather large window, or glazed door, opening on to a balcony. From this balcony one had a good view of a wide, quaint, hilly street, with high walls on each side, in which, at irregular intervals, were visible the great *portes-cochères* leading into the coach-yards of the spacious old mansions or *hôtels* of the gentry still resident in an old town of Normandy. Here and

¹ The incident here related is perfectly true. The Abbaye de Cérisy is the real name of the place where the strange recluse was seen.

there stood a more modest dwelling-house, guiltless of *cour*¹ (though not of *jardin*² at the back), whose front-door steps ran straight down to the pavement. It was a very picturesque street, from every point of view, and the long, level rays of the afternoon sun showed it to peculiar advantage.

Inside the boudoir, it was difficult to believe one's self still in the nineteenth century. The room was entirely lined with wood—light-colored brown wood—into the panels of which were inserted Louis XVI paintings of the quaintest description: cupids, nymphs, garden and terrace landscapes, grotesque statues, grinning masks. The furniture, of which there was not much, and indeed the space was very small, was mostly of the same date; a small brass-mounted, marble-topped bureau occupied one corner; two or three medallion-backed, white-painted chairs stood about.

With this background, the little English tea-table, and the two friends seated—on easier chairs than the Louis XVI *fauteuils*—were scarcely in keeping. But the cups and saucers were of old Sèvres; and the snow-white hair, drawn back from the forehead, of the elder of the two ladies—a woman of sixty or thereabouts—simply though richly dressed in black, with touches of creamy old

¹ Courtyard.

² Garden.

lace here and there, harmonized with the whole, or rather seemed a sort of meeting-point for the past and the present. This lady was the Marquise de Romars; her companion, considerably younger than herself, was her visitor, and an Englishwoman, by name Miss Poyndsett.

Miss Poyndsett was on her way home from a winter spent in the south; she had lingered, nothing loth, to pass a few days with her hospitable old friend.

“Then there is really no chance of my seeing you again this year, my dear Clemency?” said the old lady.

Miss Poyndsett shook her head. “None whatever, unless you will come over to us.”

“That I cannot. But I had hoped the exhibition, the Eiffel Tower, and all the rest of it, would have tempted some of you to Paris; and, of course, it is easy to make this a half-way, or three-quarters-way house,” said Madame de Romars—who, by the way, spoke perfect English—insinuatingly.

Again Miss Poyndsett shook her head, more vigorously this time.

“If a visit to you were not temptation enough, certainly Paris in a state of exhibition would not be,” she said, half laughingly. “I cannot bear exhibitions, and Paris, with a world’s show going on,

is worst of all. Just think of how one would be running up against everybody one had ever seen or heard of. Not that I am unsociable; but one doesn't leave one's own country to see one's own countryfolk. When I travel, I like to see new things and people."

"The exhibition would be new, and the Eiffel Tower has certainly never been seen before," said Madame de Romars, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"Dear madame, I think the Eiffel Tower has bewitched you," replied her friend. "I have not the very slightest wish to see it nor the exhibition. And then the association! I should have thought you would have shrunk from any commemoration of the horrors of a hundred years ago."

The old lady did not at once reply.

"This year actually commemorates the destruction of the Bastille," she said, after a little pause. "With *that* one can have full sympathy. As for what came afterward——" she sighed deeply. "One of the most grievous thoughts about the great Revolution," she went on—"even, in the widest sense, more grievous than the terrible individual horrors, is what it *might* have been and done; what enormous opportunities for the world's good were lost at that time. For the individual suffering is over and past, and doubtless it made saints

and martyrs of many who might otherwise have lived and died like soulless animals; but the misdirection, the fearful misuse and abuse of the powers at that time set free will never—while the world lasts, it sometimes seems to me—be, in their sad consequences, past and over.”

Miss Poyndsett listened attentively and respectfully, but scarcely as if she fully understood.

“I am no philosopher like you, dear madame,” she said. “To me, I own the story of the great Revolution is just like a very fearful, though most fascinating, tragedy; it is the personal histories mixed up in it that always come into my mind. And oh, by-the-by, I am so much obliged to you for lending me Monsieur de Beauchesne’s book; it has interested me exceedingly. Indeed, for a time, some parts of it almost haunted me.”

“You mean, of course, his ‘Louis XVII.’ I forgot I had lent it to you. Yes, it is a very impressive book, and a very exhaustive account of what is always full of fresh interest—the history of the Royal Family in the Temple. Of course the dauphin is the central figure. Monsieur de Beauchesne has really got together everything that is known about the poor little prince. One or two of the anecdotes are intensely touching.”

“Almost too much so. I can’t imagine ever be-

ing able to read them without tears," the English lady replied. "Monsieur de Beauchesne seems quite to set beyond a doubt the child's death in his prison," she went on, after a little pause. "It is almost disappointing, there is such a fascination about the subject. And one would fain have hoped that *perhaps*, after all, though his princship was over for ever, the poor boy had some peaceful years, even in a comparatively humble position."

The Marquise remained silent for a moment or two. When she spoke, her voice was very grave and almost solemn.

"I don't think it is to be hoped or wished that it was so," she said. "For my part, I would rather believe he died at the time generally supposed. Nothing in the annals of child saints or martyrs could be more beautiful, more holy, than those last days of his life in the Temple. One can scarcely think it *possible* that a soul so near heaven had longer to stay on earth. And yet—No, Clemency, I *hope* he died that 8th of June. His life, had he lived, *did* he live, must have been too sad."

Something in her words and tone struck her companion. She looked up eagerly.

"There is a shade of uncertainty in your way of speaking, dear madame," she said. "You don't mean to say that you have any other theory on the

subject, besides all the stories Monsieur de Beauchesne refutes so carefully?"

"No," said the old lady. "I have no *theory*, but—I had a strange adventure once, Clemency, and though I have told it to very few—no one now living remembers it—I have never lost the impression it left on my mind."

She stopped. Miss Poyndsett opened her lips to speak, but hesitated. Her eager look and questioning eyes, however, told their own story. Madame de Romars understood her.

"I will tell it to you if you like," she said. "There is no reason why I should not; it can do no one any harm. And I fear you will be disappointed; there is so little to tell."

"No, no; whatever it is, it will interest me," said Clemency. "And thank you so much. I hope there is nothing painful to yourself in it."

"Not exactly. Oh no; it only brings back past days, and sadder than that, past hopes and bright anticipations never to be realized. For I was very young then—not twenty-one—and I think nearly all the friends just at that time associated with me are dead—yes, all. But I will tell you my story. It was, as nearly as I can remember, in the year 1844. We, my husband and I, were staying with a party of friends, mostly young—I myself was

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little more than a bride—at a charming old château in the further extremity of Normandy. The château was old, but recently restored, so that, especially as the restoration had been carried out with the greatest care and good taste, it really combined the attractions of antiquity with those of modern life. It had been for centuries the home of our hosts' ancestors; the present festivities were a sort of 'house-warming,' after the restorations, as well as to do honor to the *fiançailles* of the lovely, young and only daughter of the family, a girl of eighteen, who was to be married a few weeks later in the season. All of these details are irrelevant to my little story, but they have remained in my memory as a sort of frame to it, or, one might say, a bright background to the strange sad impression my adventure left.

"Our days passed delightfully. The country was picturesque and beautiful. There were points of interest of various kinds, old Roman remains, famous 'views,' charming woods; every day some new excursion to one or other of these was planned, and, thanks to the quite exceptionally fine weather, these were successfully carried out. Yes, it was a very happy time.

"One day, an expedition was arranged to visit the ancient Abbaye de Cérisy. I was delighted to

make one of the party, especially as we were to stop at the Château de Selcourt, on the way, which we did. This is one of the few remaining really feudal châteaux, interesting on that ground alone, though it is also worth visiting for its quantity of old tapestry, furniture, and some queer pictures. One I remember well, was a picture of the Blessed Virgin surrounded by her *cousins*, knights in full 'Moyen Age' armor, and ladies in the garb of nuns. At Selcourt, too, there are seven fish-ponds, considered a unique curiosity. Then we drove on to Cérisy. We had spent more time than we intended at Selcourt, so that when we got to the Abbaye, it was already rather late afternoon. We hastened to visit the church and the old cloisters, and the architectural connoisseurs among us were loud in their praise of the grandly simple Norman style. There was one fish-pond at Cérisy too, a very large one, and there was a legend connected with it which interested some of our party. I got tired of the discussion about it and wandered off by myself, choosing accidentally a path which led, I found, to some old, half-ruinous buildings. This sort of thing has always had a great attraction for me, and I had a curiosity to find the building which, in former days, must have been the Abbot's house. I was really delighted when suddenly, at the angle of a wall

which I had been skirting, I came upon a very massive and most curiously carved door, in an almost perfect state of preservation. I felt like the prince in the 'Sleeping Beauty' story, only my door was not overgrown with nettles and brambles. On the contrary, it was slightly ajar, and had evidently been opened not long before, for a very slight touch made it turn on its hinges enough for me to see before me a large wide stone staircase with handsome and curiously carved *rampe* also in stone. This was too enticing to resist. Up I mounted, pleasantly excited by a slight sense of impropriety in my proceedings, and had almost reached the small landing at the top of the staircase when I was confronted by a young peasant girl, who, startled and alarmed by my appearance, stood there as if to remonstrate against my going farther. But, the blood of my curiosity and love of adventure was 'up' by this time; I moved on, taking no notice whatever of her evident terror and half-whispered, stammering remonstrances. My whole attention was absorbed by the strangeness of the interior which I began to catch sight of. The door of a room on my right was wide open, revealing a sort of thick hedge or wall of close-growing cactus and other unfamiliar, weird-looking exotic shrubs. They were of unusual height, and though I have

visited many botanical gardens in my time, and had even possessed, in my own conservatories, many curious foreign plants, I have never seen any to equal these, nor could I have given a name to any one of them. They must have been there, growing where they stood, for many and many a year; for their branches, in several cases, reached up to the old black beams of the apartment, and the lower part of this strange hedge, so to call it, quite concealed from view, where I first stood, the room behind. But a step or two forward and a slight turn to the right showed me more. I perceived that the hedge stopped, leaving an entrance way, as it were, and standing just in it, most of the interior was revealed to me. I saw before me a fair-sized room, at once strongly impressing me by its ancient and old-world aspect. In one corner, that on my right, stood a large square black oak bedstead of the style known as 'Henri IV'; the faded, though well-preserved hangings and coverlet were of the same period, for to an eye trained and accustomed to judge of such things almost from childhood, thus much can be perceived at a glance. The dark wooden chairs, their seats covered with tapestry, were of the same period; and had evidently, so bravely to stand the wear and tear of centuries, been of the very best materials. A fairly good fire

was burning in the open stone hearth, and some preparation for a meal seemed to be simmering upon it, but my gaze was drawn upwards by the really splendid carving of the old mantelpiece and jambs, and I was on the point of moving forward to examine it more closely, when my presumption was suddenly arrested. From the farther side of the room came a deep sepulchral voice.

“ ‘Madame,’ it said—I can hear it now—‘*que demandez-vous?*’ ”¹ and turning toward the left, where the afternoon light happened to fall, I saw, half concealed by a large olive-green colored curtain of heavy cloth, the strangest being my eyes have ever rested upon. I did not see the whole of the figure; it remained half shrouded by the curtain, and by the screen of plants I have tried to describe, but the face was very plainly visible. Whether it was that of a man or a woman I have never been able to decide; the unuttered exclamation that rose to my lips was a strange one.

“ ‘That is the face of a Bourbon!’ ”

“ For familiar to me from my earliest years have been the strongly marked, to me, *unmistakable* features of that unfortunate race.

“ The snow-white hair of the mysterious being was drawn back from the forehead and concealed

¹ What do you want?

by some kind of skull-cap or cowl, again covered in its turn by something black and floating like a veil; a black cape or mantle shrouded as much of the rest of the body as was visible. The figure neither rose nor moved, but remained seated in front of a small table covered with books, papers, and writing materials, and as I stood, half-stunned, again came the deep voice, accompanied this time by a glance of the haughtiest and sternest—

“ ‘ Que voulez-vous, Madame? On n’entre pas ici.’ ¹

“ My position was not a dignified one, only my curiosity had supported me so far! But, notwithstanding its increasing intensity, I dared not persist. With one glance round the extraordinary scene, a glance that has printed it forever on my memory, and hastily murmured words of respectful apology, I retreated, to find myself once more on the landing outside, where the peasant girl, by this time almost imbecile with terror, shiveringly awaited me. I don’t know if she half pushed or pulled me down the stairs—but once outside, I turned and asked her the reason of her extraordinary behavior. After all, I had done no harm; I was only interested in the old buildings; what was she afraid of, and who was the person she served?

¹ What do you want? There is no admittance here.

“ I could obtain no satisfactory reply. She had not been long there, she said; she belonged to a distant part of the country—as, indeed, her costume showed—and could tell me nothing of the Abbaye nor its inmates. Then she reëntered the building, and closed the door in my face—not rudely, but as if completely indifferent to any but the one idea of getting me off the premises. Poor girl, I dare say a reprimand of the sharpest was in store for her!

“ I retraced my steps in the direction where I had left my friends. A few paces farther on, I almost ran against an aged priest, evidently bound for the place I had just left. An expression of surprise and annoyance crossed his face on seeing me, or rather the direction whence I came. He did not speak, but stopped short, and stood there motionless, openly watching me till I passed through a great archway in a wall a little farther on, and was lost to his sight.

“ Close at hand were my friends, somewhat impatiently awaiting my return by the famous fishpond. Its legend—a gruesome one enough, of its having been used as a burial-place for their prisoners by some bloodthirsty monks of old, to the benefit of the fat carp and pike—had been discussed and quarreled over sufficiently, and the whole party was now anxious to get home to the

cheery château. During the drive thither, I told my story, which was received with great interest. Various plans were formed for revisiting Cérisy, and trying to solve the mystery, but somehow they were never carried out. Nor did the inquiries set on foot in the neighborhood about the strange inhabitant of the ruined Abbaye, ever bring anything to light concerning him. Our party shortly after broke up. I never revisited my friends at their château. Something prevented my going to them the following year, and after that I had no longer any reason for doing so. Troubles, as unexpected as undeserved, fell thickly on our kind hosts, the once happy family there; and notwithstanding my curiosity about the being I have described, I never could make up my mind to revisit the neighborhood of Cérisy."

Madame de Romars stopped. Clemency Poynsett looked up inquiringly.

"How sad!" she said feelingly. "Yes, dear madame, I well understand. But, tell me, please—do you really think it *possible*—had you the feeling that the figure you saw was—was perhaps really Louis XVII—the poor little prince, grown into—Stay, *would* he have been as old as the recluse of the Abbaye at the time you named; about the year 1844, was it not?"

“He was born in 1785,” said the Marquise. “He would have been, therefore, fifty-nine at the date of my adventure. Certainly, the person I saw looked much older than that, to judge in an ordinary way. But then—consider what the Prince went through! *Had* he lived, it is scarcely to be expected he would ever have recovered his health bodily or mental; at least, he could never have been like other people. No; *if* Louis XVII lived, I can scarcely help picturing him to myself at sixty as at best much such a prematurely aged, fearfully *marked* human being as the strange vision I came across. I hope it was not he—I cannot endure to think it was—to picture the long monotonous years that must have passed in that sad captivity of concealment, and, in all probability, in great physical suffering too. For I *think* the poor creature I saw must have been paralyzed or something of that kind. Yet there was such dignity, such reserve and *presence* about the strange being—no angry chatter or scolding; just the few cold, haughty, yet not uncourteous words I have repeated.”

“Whoever it was—man or woman—must have been quite of the upper classes,” said Miss Poynsett.

“O dear, yes—a thousand times, yes. The tone, the accent, the manner—all showed it. *Poor* old

man, for I think it was a man, Louis XVII or not —there was a sad story shut up in that strange room—a story almost certainly connected with that awful time a century ago. How often since, I have wished I could have shown some kindness to the recluse, infused some little brightness into that almost unearthly life! But it could not have been. And whoever it was, it is all over now ——”

“I, too, hope it was not the Prince,” said Clemency, “strangely fascinating though the idea is. But there were the Bourbon features.”

“Yes,” agreed her old friend. “There were those, undoubtedly; the *unmistakable* Bourbon features.”



LOST IN THE FOG

NOAH BROOKS

“DOWN with your helm! you’ll have us hard and fast aground!”

My acquaintance with Captain Booden was at that time somewhat limited, and if possible I knew less of the difficult and narrow exit from Bolinas Bay than I did of Captain Booden. So with great trepidation I jammed the helm hard down, and the obedient little *Lively Polly* fell off easily, and we were over the bar and gliding gently along under the steep bluff of the Mesa, whose rocky edge rising sheer from the beach and crowned with dry grass,

rose far above the pennon of the little schooner. I did not intend to deceive Captain Booden, but being anxious to work my way down to San Francisco, I had shipped as "able seaman" on the *Lively Polly*, though it was a long day since I had handled a foresheet or anything bigger than the little plungers which hover about Bolinas Bay, and latterly I had been ranching it at Point Reyes. We had glided out of the narrow channel which is skirted on one side by a long sand-spit that curves around and makes the southern and western shelter of the bay, and on the other side by a huge elevated tongue of tableland, called by the inhabitants thereabouts the Mesa. High, precipitous, perpendicular, level, and dotted with farmhouses, this singular bit of land stretches several miles out southward to sea, bordered with a rocky beach, and tapered off into the wide ocean with Duxbury Reef—a dangerous rocky reef, curving down to the southward and almost always white with foam, save when the sea is calm, and then the great lazy green waves eddy noiselessly over the half-hidden rocks, or slip like oil over the dreadful dangers which they hide.

Behind us was the lovely bay of Bolinas, blue and sparkling in the summer afternoon sun, its borders dotted with thrifty ranches, and the woody ravines and bristling Tamalpais Range rising over

all. The tide was running out, and only a peaceful swash whispered along the level sandy beach on our left, where the busy sandpiper chased the playful wave as it softly rose and fell along the shore. On the higher centre of the sand-spit which shuts in the bay on that side, a row of ashy-colored gulls sunned themselves, and blinked at us sleepily as we drifted slowly out of the channel, our breeze cut off by the Mesa, that hemmed us in on the right.

I have told you that I did not much pretend to seamanship, but I was not sorry that I had taken passage on the *Lively Polly*, for there is always something novel and fascinating to me in coasting a region which I have heretofore known only by its hills, cañons, and sea-beaches. The trip is usually made from Bolinas Bay to San Francisco in five or six hours, when wind and tide favor; and I could bear being knocked about by Captain Booden for that length of time, especially as there was one other hand on board—"Lanky" he was called—but whether a foremast hand or landsman I do not know. He had been teaching school at Jaybird Cañon, and was a little more awkward with the running rigging of the *Lively Polly* than I was. Captain Booden was, therefore, the main reliance of the little twenty-ton schooner, and if her deck-load of firewood and cargo of butter and eggs ever

reached a market, the skilful and profane skipper should have all the credit thereof.

The wind died away, and the sea, before ruffled with a wholesale breeze, grew as calm as a sheet of billowy glass, heaving only in long, gentle undulations on which the sinking sun bestowed a green and golden glory, dimmed only by the white fog-bank that came drifting slowly up from the Farralones, now shut out from view by the lovely haze. Captain Booden gazed morosely on the western horizon, and swore by a big round oath that we should not have a capful of wind if that fog-bank did not lift. But we were fairly out of the bay; the Mesa was lessening in the distance, and as we drifted slowly southward the red-roofed buildings on its level rim grew to look like toy-houses, and we heard the dull moan of the ebb-tide on Duxbury Reef on our star-board bow. The sea grew dead calm and the wind fell quite away, but still we drifted southward, passing Rocky Point and peering curiously into Pilot Boat Cove, which looked so strangely unfamiliar to me from the sea, though I had fished in its trout-brooks many a day, and had hauled driftwood from the rocky beach to Johnson's ranch in times gone by. The tide turned after sundown, and Captain Booden thought we ought to get a bit of wind then; but it did not come, and the fog crept up and up the

glassy sea, rolling in huge wreaths of mist, shutting out the surface of the water, and finally the gray rocks of North Heads were hidden, and little by little the shore was curtained from our view and we were becalmed in the fog.

To say that the skipper swore would hardly describe his case. He cursed his luck, his stars, his foretop, his main hatch, his lubberly crew—Lanky and me—and a variety of other persons and things; but all to no avail. Night came on, and the light on North Heads gleamed at us with a sickly eye through the deepening fog. We had a bit of luncheon with us, but no fire, and were fain to content ourselves with cold meat, bread, and water, hoping that a warm breakfast in San Francisco would make some amends for our present short rations. But the night wore on, and we were still tumbling about in the rising sea without wind enough to fill our sails, a rayless sky overhead, and with breakers continually under our lee. Once we saw lights on shore, and heard the sullen thud of rollers that smote against the rocks; it was aggravating, as the fog lifted for a space, to see the cheerful windows of the Cliff House, and almost hear the merry calls of pleasure-seekers as they muffled themselves in their wraps and drove gayly up the hill, reckless of the poor homeless mariners who

were drifting comfortlessly about so near the shore they could not reach. We got out the sweeps and rowed lustily for several hours, steering by the compass and taking our bearings from the cliff.

But we lost our bearings in the maze of currents in which we soon found ourselves, and the dim shore melted away in the thickening fog. To add to our difficulties, Captain Booden put his head most frequently into the cuddy; and when it emerged, he smelt dreadfully of gin. Lanky and I held a secret council, in which we agreed, in case he became intoxicated, we would rise up in mutiny and work the vessel on our own account. He shortly "lost his head," as Lanky phrased it; and slipping down on the deck, went quietly to sleep. At four o'clock in the morning the gray fog grew grayer with the early dawning; and as I gazed with weary eyes into the vague unknown that shut us in, Booden roused himself and seizing the tiller from my hand, bawled, "'Bout ship, you swab, we're on the Farralones!" And sure enough, there loomed right under our starboard quarter a group of conical rocks, steeply rising from the restless blue sea. Their wild white sides were crowded with chattering sea-fowl; and far above, like a faint nimbus in the sky, shone the feeble rays of the lighthouse lantern, now almost quenched by the dull gleam of day that crept up

from the water. The helm was jammed hard down. There was no time to get out sweeps; but still drifting helplessly, we barely grazed the bare rocks of the islet, and swung clear, slinking once more into the gloom.

Our scanty stock of provisions and water was gone; but there was no danger of starvation, for the generous product of the henneries and dairies of Bolinas filled the vessel's hold—albeit raw eggs and butter without bread might only serve as a barrier against famine. So we drifted and tumbled about—still no wind and no sign of the lifting of the fog. Once in a while it would roll upward and show a long, flat expanse of water, tempting us to believe that the blessed sky was coming out at last; but soon the veil fell again, and we aimlessly wondered where we were and whither we were drifting. There is something awful and mysterious in the shadowy nothingness that surrounds one in a fog at sea. You fancy that out of that impenetrable mist may suddenly burst some great disaster or danger. Strange shapes appear to be forming themselves in the obscurity out of which they emerge, and the eye is wearied beyond expression with looking into a vacuity which continually promises to evolve into something, but never does.

Thus idly drifting, we heard, first, the creaking

of a block, then a faint wash of sea; and out of the white depths of the fog came the bulky hull of a full-rigged ship. Her sails were set, but she made scarcely steerage way. Her rusty sides and general look bespoke a long voyage just concluding; and we found on hailing her that she was the British ship *Marathon*, from Calcutta for San Francisco. We boarded the *Marathon*, though almost in sight of our own port, with something of the feeling that shipwrecked seamen may have when they reach land. It was odd that we, lost and wandering as we were, should be thus encountered in the vast unknown where we were drifting by a strange ship; and though scarcely two hours' sail from home, should be supplied with bread and water by a Britisher from the Indies. We gave the men all the information we had about the pilots, whom we wanted so much to meet ourselves; and after following slowly for a few hours by the huge side of our strange friend, parted company—the black hull and huge spars of the Indiaman gradually lessening in the mist that shut her from our view. We had touched a chord that bound us to our fellow-men; but it was drawn from our hands, and the unfathomable abyss in which we floated had swallowed up each human trace, except what was comprised on the contracted deck of the *Lively Polly*,

where Captain Booden sat glumly whittling, and Lanky meditatively peered after the vanished *Marathon*, as though his soul and all his hopes had gone with her. The deck, with its load of cordwood; the sails and rigging; the sliding-hutch of the little cuddy; and all the features of the *Lively Polly*, but yesterday so unfamiliar, were now as odiously wearisome as though I had known them for a century. It seemed as if I had never known any other place.

All that day we floated aimlessly along, moved only by the sluggish currents, which shifted occasionally, but generally bore us westward and southward; not a breath of wind arose, and our sails were as useless as though we had been on dry land. Night came on again, and found us still entirely without reckoning and as completely "at sea" as before. To add to our discomfort, a drizzling rain, unusual for the season of the year, set in, and we cowered on the wet deck-load, more than ever disgusted with each other and the world. During the night a big ocean steamer came plunging and crashing through the darkness, her lights gleaming redly through the dense medium as she cautiously felt her way past us, falling off a few points as she heard our hail. We lay right in her path, but with tin horns and a wild Indian yell from the versatile

Lanky managed to make ourselves heard, and the mysterious stranger disappeared in the fog as suddenly as she had come, and we were once more alone in the darkness.

The night wore slowly away, and we made out to catch a few hours' sleep, standing "watch and watch" with each other of our slender crew. Day dawned again, and we broke our fast with the last of the *Marathon's* biscuit, having "broken cargo" to eke out our cold repast with some of the Bolinas butter and eggs which we were taking to a most unexpected market.

Suddenly, about six o'clock in the morning, we heard the sound of breakers ahead, and above the sullen roar of the surf I distinctly heard the tinklings of a bell. We got out our sweeps and had commenced to row wearily once more, when the fog lifted and before us lay the blessed land. A high range of sparsely wooded hills, crowned with rocky ledges, and with abrupt slopes covered with dry brown grass, running to the water's edge, formed the background of the picture. Nearer, a tongue of high land, brushy and rocky, made out from the main shore, and curving southward, formed a shelter to what seemed a harbor within. Against the precipitous point the sea broke with a heavy blow, and a few ugly peaks of rock lifted

their heads above the heaving green of the sea. High up above the sky-line rose one tall, sharp, blue peak, yet veiled in the floating mist, but its base melted away into a mass of verdure that stretched from the shore far up the mountain-side. Our sweeps were now used to bring us around the point and cautiously pulling in, we opened a lovely bay bordered with orchards and vineyards, in the midst of which was a neat village, glittering white in the sunshine, and clustered around an old-fashioned mission church, whose quaint gable and tower reminded us of the buildings of the early Spanish settlers of the country. As we neared the shore (there was no landing-place) we could see an unwonted commotion in the clean streets, and a flag was run up to the top of a white staff that stood in the midst of a plaza. Captain Booden returned the compliment by hoisting the Stars and Stripes at our mainmast head, but was sorely bothered with the mingled dyes of the flag on shore. A puff of air blew out its folds, and to our surprise disclosed the Mexican national standard.

“Blast them greasers,” said the patriotic skipper, “if they ain’t gone and h’isted a Mexican cactus flag, then I’m blowed.” He seriously thought of hauling down his beloved national colors again, resenting the insult of hoisting a foreign flag on

American soil. He pocketed the affront, however, remarking that "they probably knew that a Bolinas butter-boat was not much of a fightist, anyway."

We dropped anchor gladly, Captain Booden being wholly at a loss as to our whereabouts. We judged that we were somewhere south of the Golden Gate, but what town this was that slept so tranquilly in the summer sun, and what hills were these that walled in the peaceful scene from the rest of the world, we could not tell. The village seemed awakening from its serene sleepiness, and one by one the windows of the adobe cottages swung open as if the people rubbed their long-closed eyes at some unwonted sight; and the doors gradually opened as though their dumb lips would hail us and ask who were these strangers that vexed the quiet waters of their bay. But two small fishing-boats lay at anchor, and these Booden said reminded him of Christopher Columbus or Noah's Ark, they were so clumsy and antique in build.

We hauled our boat up alongside, and all hands got in and went ashore. As we landed, a little shudder seemed to go through the sleepy old place, as if it had been rudely disturbed from its comfortable nap, and a sudden sob of sea air swept through the quiet streets as though the insensate houses had

actually breathed the weary sigh of awaking. The buildings were low and white, with dark-skinned children basking in the doors, and grass hammocks swinging beneath open verandas. There were no stores, no sign of business, and no sound of vehicles or labor; all was as decorous and quiet, to use the skipper's description, "as if the people had slicked up their dooryards, whitewashed their houses, and gone to bed." It was just like a New England Sabbath in a Mexican village.

And this fancy was further colored by a strange procession which now met us as we went up from the narrow beach, having first made fast our boat. A lean Mexican priest, with an enormous shovel hat and particularly shabby cassock, came toward us, followed by a motley crowd of Mexicans, prominent among whom was a pompous old man clad in a seedy Mexican uniform and wearing a trailing rapier at his side. The rest of the procession was brought up with a crowd of shy women, dark-eyed and tawny and all poorly clad, though otherwise comfortable enough in condition. These hung back and wonderingly looked at the strange faces, as though they had never seen the like before. The old padre lifted his skinny hands, and said something in Spanish which I did not understand.

"Why, the old mummy is slinging his popish

blessings at us!" This was Lanky's interpretation of the kindly priest's paternal salutation. And, sure enough, he was welcoming us to the shore of San Ildefonso with holy fervor and religious phrase.

"I say," said Booden, a little testily, "what did you say was the name of this place, and where away does it lay from 'Frisco?" In very choice Castilian, as Lanky declared, the priest rejoined that he did not understand the language in which Booden was speaking. "Then bring on somebody that does," rejoined that irreverent mariner, when due interpretation had been made. The padre protested that no one in the village understood the English tongue. The skipper gave a long, low whistle of suppressed astonishment, and wondered if we had drifted down to Lower California in two days and nights and had struck a Mexican settlement. The colors on the flagstaff and the absence of any Americans gave some show of reason to this startling conclusion; and Lanky, who was now the interpreter of the party, asked the name of the place, and was again told that it was San Ildefonso; but when he asked what country it was in and how far it was to San Francisco, he was met with a polite "I do not understand you, Señor."

Here was a puzzle; becalmed in a strange port

only two days' drift from the city of San Francisco; a town which the schoolmaster declared was not laid down on any map; a population that spoke only Spanish and did not know English when they heard it; a Mexican flag flying over the town, and an educated priest who did not know what we meant when we asked how far it was to San Francisco. Were we bewitched?

Accepting a hospitable invitation from the padre, we sauntered up to the plaza, where we were ushered into a long, low room, which might once have been a military barrack-room. It was neatly whitewashed and had a hard clay floor, and along the walls were a few ancient firelocks and a venerable picture of "His Excellency, General Santa Aña, President of the Republic of Mexico," as a legend beneath it set forth.

Breakfast of chickens, vegetables, bread, and an excellent sort of country wine (this last being served in a big earthen bottle) was served up to us on the long unpainted table that stood in the middle of the room. During the repast our host, the priest, sat with folded hands intently regarding us, while the rest of the people clustered around the door and open windows, eying us with indescribable and incomprehensible curiosity. If we had been visitors from the moon we could not have attracted

more attention. Even the stolid Indians, a few of whom strolled lazily about, came and gazed at us until the pompous old man in faded Mexican uniform drove them noisily away from the window, where they shut out the light and the pleasant morning air, perfumed with heliotropes, verbenas, and sweet herbs that grew luxuriantly about the houses.

The padre had restrained his curiosity out of rigid politeness until we had eaten, when he began by asking, "Did our galleon come from Manila?" We told him that we only came from Bolinas; whereat he said once more, with a puzzled look of pain, "I do not understand you, Señor." Then pointing through the open doorway to where the *Lively Polly* peacefully floated at anchor, he asked what ensign was that which floated at her masthead. Lanky proudly, but with some astonishment, replied: "That's the American flag, Señor." At this the seedy old man in uniform eagerly said: "Americanos! Americanos! why, I saw some of those people and that flag at Monterey." Lanky asked him if Monterey was not full of Americans and did not have plenty of flags. The Ancient replied that he did not know; it was a long time since he had been there. Lanky observed that perhaps he had never been there. "I was there in 1835,"

said the Ancient. This curious speech being interpreted to Captain Booden, that worthy remarked that he did not believe that he had seen a white man since.

After an ineffectual effort to explain to the company where Bolinas was, we rose and went out for a view of the town. It was beautifully situated on a gentle rise which swelled up from the water's edge and fell rapidly off in the rear of the town into a deep ravine, where a brawling mountain stream supplied a little flouring-mill with motive power. Beyond the ravine were small fields of grain, beans and lentils on the rolling slopes, and back of these rose the dark, dense vegetation of low hills, while over all were the rough and ragged ridges of mountains closing in all the scene. The town itself, as I have said, was white and clean; the houses were low-browed, with windows secured by wooden shutters, only a few glazed sashes being seen anywhere. Out of these openings in the thick adobe walls of the humble homes of the villagers flashed the curious, the abashed glances of many a dark-eyed señorita, who fled, laughing, as we approached. The old church was on the plaza, and in its odd-shaped turret tinkled the little bell whose notes had sounded the morning angelus when we were knocking about in the fog outside. High up on its

quaintly arched gable was inscribed in antique letters "1796." In reply to a sceptical remark from Lanky, Booden declared that "the old shell looked as though it might have been built in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, for that matter." The worthy skipper had a misty idea that all old Spanish buildings were built in the days of these famous sovereigns.

Hearing the names of Ferdinand and Isabella, the padre gravely and reverentially asked: "And is the health of His Excellency, General Santa Aña, whom God protect, still continued to him?"

With great amazement, Lanky replied: "Santa Aña! why, the last heard of him was that he was keeping a cockpit in Havana; some of the newspapers published an obituary of him about six months ago; but I believe he is alive yet somewhere."

A little flush of indignation mantled the old man's cheek, and with a tinge of severity in his voice he said: "I have heard that shameful scandal about our noble President once before, but you must excuse me if I ask you not to repeat it. It is true he took away our Pious Fund some years since, but he is still our revered President, and I would not hear him ill-spoken of any more than our puissant and mighty Ferdinand, of whom you just

spoke—may he rest in glory!” and here the good priest crossed himself devoutly.

“What is the old priest jabbering about?” asked Captain Booden, impatiently; for he was in haste to “get his bearings” and be off. When Lanky replied, he burst out: “Tell him that Santa Aña is not President of Mexico any more than I am, and that he hasn’t amounted to a row of pins since California was part of the United States.”

Lanky faithfully interpreted this fling at the ex-president. Whereupon the padre, motioning to the Ancient to put up his rapier, which had leaped out of its rusty scabbard, said, “Nay, Señor, you would insult an old man. We have never been told yet by our government that the Province of California was alienated from the great Republic of Mexico, and we owe allegiance to none save the nation whose flag we love so well”; and the old man turned his tear-dimmed eyes toward the ragged standard of Mexico that drooped from the staff in the plaza. Continuing, he said, “Our noble country has strangely forgotten us, and though we watch the harbor-entrance year after year, no tidings ever comes. The galleon that was to bring us stores has never been seen on the horizon yet, and we seem lost in the fog.”

The schoolmaster of Jaybird Cañon managed to

tell us what the priest had said, and then asked when he had last heard of the outside world. "It was in 1837," said he sadly, "when we sent a courier to the Mission del Carmelo, at Monterey, for tidings from New Spain. He never came back, and the great earthquake which shook the country hereabout opened a huge chasm across the country just back of the Sierra yonder, and none dared to cross over to the main land. The saints have defended us in peace, and it is the will of Heaven that we shall stay here by ourselves until the Holy Virgin, in answer to our prayers, shall send us deliverance."

Here was a new revelation. This was an old Spanish Catholic mission, settled in 1796, called San Ildefonso, which had evidently been overlooked for nearly forty years, and had quietly slept in an unknown solitude while the country had been transferred to the United States from the flag that still idly waved over it. Lost in the fog! Here was a whole town lost in a fog of years. Empires and dynasties had risen and fallen; the world had repeatedly been shaken to its centre, and this people had heeded it not; a great civil war had ravaged the country to which they now belonged, and they knew not of it; poor Mexico herself had been torn with dissensions and had been insulted with an empire, and these peaceful and weary watchers for tidings

from "New Spain" had recked nothing of all these things. All around them the busy state of California was scarred with the eager pick of gold-seekers or the shining share of the husbandman; towns and cities had sprung up where these patriarchs had only known of vast cattle ranges or sleepy missions of the Roman Catholic Fathers. They knew nothing of the great city of San Francisco, with its busy marts and crowded harbor; and thought of its broad bay—if they thought of it at all—as the lovely shore of Yerba Buena, bounded by bleak hills and almost unvexed by any keel. The political storms of forty years had gone hurtless over their heads, and in a certain sort of dreamless sleep, San Ildefonso had still remained true to the red, white, and green flag that had long since disappeared from every part of the state save here, where it was still loved and revered as the banner of the soil.

The social and political framework of the town had been kept up through all these years. There had been no connection with the fountain of political power, but the town was ruled by the legally elected *Ayuntamiento*, or Common Council, of which the Ancient, Señor Apolonario Maldonado, was President or *Alcalde*. They were daily looking for advices from Don José Castro, Governor of the loyal province of California; and so they had

been looking daily for forty years. We asked if they had not heard from any of the prying Yankees who crowd the country. Father Ignacio—for that was the padre's name—replied, “Yes; five years ago, when the winter rains had just set in, a tall, spare man, who talked some French and some Spanish, came down over the mountains with a pack containing pocket-knives, razors, soap, perfumery, laces, and other curious wares, and besought our people to purchase. We have not much coin, but were disposed to treat him Christianly, until he did declare that President General Santa Aña, whom may the saints defend! was a thief and gambler, and had gambled away the Province of California to the United States; whereupon we drove him hence, the Ayuntamiento sending a trusty guard to see him two leagues from the borders of the pueblo. But months after, we discovered his pack and such of his poor bones as the wild beasts of prey had not carried off, at the base of a precipice where he had fallen. His few remains and his goods were together buried on the mountain-side and I lamented that we had been so hard with him. But the saints forbid that he should go back and tell where the people of San Ildefonso were waiting to hear from their own neglectful country, which may Heaven defend, bless and prosper.”

The little town took on a new interest to us cold outsiders after hearing its strange and almost improbable story. We could have scarcely believed that San Ildefonso had actually been overlooked in the transfer of the country from Mexico to the United States, and had for nearly forty years been hidden away between the Sierra and the sea; but if we were disposed to doubt the word of the good father, here was intrinsic evidence of the truth of the narrative. There were no Americans here; only the remnants of the old Mexican occupation and the civilized Indians. No traces of later civilization could be found; but the simple dresses, tools, implements of husbandry, and household utensils were such as I have seen in the half-civilized wilds of Central America. The old mill in the cañon behind the town was a curiosity of clumsiness, and nine-tenths of the water-power of the arroya that supplied it were wasted.

Besides, until now, who ever heard of such a town in California as San Ildefonso? Upon what map can any such headland and bay be traced? and where are the historic records of the pueblo whose well-defined boundaries lay palpably before us? I have dwelt upon this point, about which I naturally have some feeling, because of the sceptical criticism which my narrative has since provoked.

There are some people in the world who never will believe anything that they have not seen, touched, or tasted for themselves; California has her share of such.

Captain Booden was disposed to reject Father Ignacio's story, until I called his attention to the fact that this was a tolerable harbor for small craft, and yet had never before been heard of; that he never knew of such a town, and that if any of his numerous associates in the marine profession knew of the town or harbor of San Ildefonso, he surely would have heard of it from them. He restrained his impatience to be off long enough to allow Father Ignacio to gather from us a few chapters of the world's history for forty years past; but the discovery of gold in California, the settlement of the country and the Pacific railroad were not so much account to him, somehow, as the condition of Europe and Mexico.

I was glad to find that we were more readily believed by Father Ignacio and the old Don than our Yankee predecessor had been; perhaps we were believed more on his corroborative evidence. The priest, however, politely declined to believe all we said—that was evident—and the Don steadily refused to believe that California had been transferred to the United States. It was a little touch-

ing to see Father Ignacio's doubts and hopes struggle in his withered face as he heard in a few brief sentences the history of his beloved land and church for forty years past. His eye kindled or it was bedewed with tears as he listened, and an occasional flash of resentment flushed his cheek when he heard something that shook his ancient faith in the established order of things. To a proposition to take a passage with us to San Francisco, he replied warmly that he would on no account leave his flock, nor attempt to thwart the manifest will of Heaven that the town should remain unheard of until delivered from its long sleep by the same agencies that had cut it off from the rest of the world. Neither would he allow any of the people to come with us.

And so we parted. We went out with the turn of the tide, Father Ignacio and the Ancient accompanying us to the beach, followed by a crowd of the townsfolk, who carried for us water and provisions for a longer voyage than ours promised to be. The venerable priest raised his hands in parting blessing as we shoved off, and I saw two big tears roll down the furrowed face of Señor Maldonado, who looked after us as a stalwart old warrior might look at the departure of a band of hopeful comrades leaving him to fret in monkish solitude while they went off to the wars again. Wind and tide served, and in a

few minutes the *Lively Polly* rounded the point, and looking back, I saw the yellow haze of the afternoon sun sifted sleepily over all the place; the knots of white-clad people standing statuesque and motionless as they gazed; the flag of Mexico faintly waving in the air; and with a sigh of relief a slumbrous veil seemed to fall over all the scene, and as our boat met the roll of the current outside the headland, the gray rocks of the point shut out the fading view, and we saw the last of San Ildefonso.

Captain Booden had gathered enough from the people to know that we were somewhere south of San Francisco (the *Lively Polly* had no chart or nautical instruments on board of course), and so he determined to coast cautiously along northward, marking the shore line in order to be able to guide other navigators to the harbor. But a light mist crept down the coast, shutting out the view of the headlands, and by midnight we had stretched out to sea again, and were once more out of our reckoning. At daybreak, however, the fog lifted, and we found ourselves in sight of land, and a brisk breeze blowing, we soon made Pigeon Point, and before noon were inside the Golden Gate, and ended our long and adventurous cruise from Bolinas Bay by hauling into the wharf of San Francisco.

I have little left to tell. Of the shameful way in which our report was received, every newspaper reader knows. At first there were some persons, men of science and reading, who were disposed to believe what we said. I printed in one of the daily newspapers an account of what we had discovered, giving a full history of San Ildefonso as Father Ignacio had given it to us. Of course, as I find is usual in such cases, the other newspapers pooh-poohed the story their contemporary had published to their exclusion, and made themselves very merry over what they were pleased to term "The Great San Ildefonso Sell."

I prevailed on Captain Booden to make a short voyage down the coast in search of the lost port. But we never saw the headland, the ridge beyond the town, nor anything that looked like these landmarks, though we went down as far as San Pedro Bay and back twice or three times. It actually did seem that the whole locality had been swallowed up, or had vanished into air. In vain did I bring the matter to the notice of the merchants and scientific men of San Francisco. Nobody would fit out an exploring expedition by land or sea; those who listened at first finally inquired if there was "any money in it." I could not give an affirmative answer, and they turned away with the discouraging

remark that the California Academy of Natural Science and the Society of Pioneers were the only bodies interested in the fate of our lost city. Even Captain Booden somehow lost all interest in the enterprise, and returned to his Bolinas coasting with the most stolid indifference. I combated the attacks of the newspapers with facts and depositions of my fellow-voyagers as long as I could, until one day the editor of the *Daily Trumpeter* (I suppress the real name of the sheet) coldly told me that the public were tired of the story of San Ildefonso. It was plain that his mind had been soured by the sarcasms of his contemporaries, and he no longer believed in me.

The newspaper controversy died away and was forgotten, but I have never relinquished the hope of proving the verity of my statements. At one time I expected to establish the truth, having heard that one Zedekiah Murch had known a Yankee peddler who had gone over the mountains of Santa Cruz and never was heard of more. But Zedekiah's memory was feeble, and he only knew that such a story prevailed long ago; so that clue was soon lost again, and the little fire of enthusiasm which it had kindled among a few persons died out. I have not yet lost all hope; and when I think of the regretful conviction that will force itself upon

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the mind of good Father Ignacio, that we were, after all, impostors, I cannot bear to reflect that I may die and visit the lost town of San Ildefonso no more.

MS. FOUND IN A BOTTLE

EDGAR ALLAN POE

OF my country and of my family I have little to say. Ill usage and length of years have driven me from the one and estranged me from the other. Hereditary wealth afforded me an education of no common order, and a contemplative turn of mind enabled me to methodize the stores which early study very diligently garnered up. Beyond all things, the works of the German moralists gave me great delight; not from any ill-advised admiration of their eloquent madness, but from the ease with which my habits of rigid thought enabled me to detect their falsities. Indeed, a strong relish for physical philosophy has, I fear, tinctured my mind with a very common error of this age—I mean the habit of referring occurrences, even the least susceptible of such reference, to the principles of that science. Upon the whole, no person could be less liable than myself to be led away from the severe precincts of truth by the *ignes fatui* of superstition. I have thought proper to premise thus much, lest the incredible tale I have to tell should be considered rather the raving of a crude imagination, than

the positive experience of a mind to which the reveries of fancy have been a dead letter and a nullity.

After many years spent in foreign travel, I sailed in the year 18—, from the port of Batavia, in the rich and populous island of Java, on a voyage to the Archipelago of the Sunda islands. I went as passenger—having no other inducement than a kind of nervous restlessness which haunted me as a fiend.

Our vessel was a beautiful ship of about four hundred tons, copper-fastened, and built at Bombay of Malabar teak. She was freighted with cotton-wool and oil, from the Laccadive islands. We had also on board coir, jaggeree, ghee, cocoa-nuts, and a few cases of opium. The storage was clumsily done and the vessel consequently crank.

We got under way with a mere breath of wind, and for many days stood along the eastern coast of Java, without any other incident to beguile the monotony of our course than the occasional meeting with some of the small grabs of the archipelago to which we were bound.

One evening, leaning over the taffrail, I observed a very singular, isolated cloud, to the N. W. It was remarkable, as well for its color, as from its

being the first we had seen since our departure from Batavia. I watched it attentively until sunset, when it spread all at once to the eastward and westward, girding in the horizon with a narrow strip of vapor, and looking like a long line of low beach. My notice was soon afterward attracted by the dusky-red appearance of the moon, and the peculiar character of the sea. The latter was undergoing a rapid change, and the water seemed more than usually transparent. Although I could distinctly see the bottom, yet, heaving the lead, I found the ship in fifteen fathoms. The air now became intolerably hot, and was loaded with spiral exhalations similar to those arising from heated iron.

As night came on, every breath of wind died away, and a more entire calm it is impossible to conceive. The flame of a candle burned upon the poop without the least perceptible motion, and a long hair, held between the finger and thumb, hung without the possibility of detecting a vibration. However, as the captain said he could perceive no indication of danger, and as we were drifting in bodily to shore, he ordered the sails to be furled, and the anchor let go. No watch was set, and the crew, consisting principally of Malays, stretched themselves deliberately upon deck.

I went below—not without a full presentiment

of evil. Indeed every appearance warranted me in apprehending a Simoon. I told the captain my fears; but he paid no attention to what I said, and left me without deigning to give a reply. My uneasiness, however, prevented me from sleeping, and about midnight I went upon deck. As I placed my foot upon the upper step of the companion-ladder, I was startled by a loud humming noise, like that occasioned by the rapid revolution of a mill wheel, and before I could ascertain its meaning, I found the ship quivering to its centre. In the next instant, a wilderness of foam hurled us upon our beam-ends, and, rushing over us fore and aft, swept the entire decks from stem to stern.

The extreme fury of the blast proved, in a great measure, the salvation of the ship. Although completely water-logged, yet, as her masts had gone by the board, she rose, after a minute, heavily from the sea, and, staggering awhile beneath the immense pressure of the tempest, finally righted.

By what miracle I escaped destruction, it is impossible to say. Stunned by the shock of the water, I found myself, upon recovery, jammed in between the stern-post and rudder. With great difficulty I gained my feet, and looking dizzily around, was at first struck with the idea of our being among breakers; so terrific, beyond the wildest imagina-

tion, was the whirlpool of mountainous and foaming ocean within which we were engulfed. After a while I heard the voice of an old Swede, who had shipped with us at the moment of our leaving port. I hallooed to him with all my strength, and presently he came reeling aft. We soon discovered that we were the sole survivors of the accident. All on deck, with the exception of ourselves, had been swept overboard; the captain and mates must have perished as they slept, for the cabins were deluged with water.

Without assistance, we could expect to do little for the security of the ship, and our exertions were at first paralyzed by the momentary expectation of going down. Our cable had, of course, parted like pack-thread, at the first breath of the hurricane, or we should have been instantaneously overwhelmed. We scudded with frightful velocity before the sea, and the water made clear breaches over us. The framework of our stern was shattered excessively, and, in almost every respect, we had received considerable injury; but to our extreme joy we found the pumps unchoked, and that we had made no great shifting of our ballast.

The main fury of the blast had already blown over, and we apprehended little danger from the violence of the wind; but we looked forward to its

total cessation with dismay; well believing, that, in our shattered condition, we should inevitably perish in the tremendous swell which would ensue. But this very just apprehension seemed by no means likely to be soon verified. For five entire days and nights—during which our only subsistence was a small quantity of jaggeree, procured with great difficulty from the fore-castle—the hulk flew at a rate defying computation, before rapidly succeeding flaws of wind, which, without equaling the first violence of the Simoon, were still more terrific than any tempest I had before encountered. Our course for the first four days was, with trifling variations, S. E. and by S.; and we must have run down the coast of New Holland.

On the fifth day the cold became extreme, although the wind had hauled round a point more to the northward. The sun arose with a sickly yellow lustre, and clambered a very few degrees above the horizon—emitting no decisive light. There were no clouds apparent, yet the wind was upon the increase, and blew with a fitful and unsteady fury. About noon, as nearly as we could guess, our attention was again arrested by the appearance of the sun. It gave out no light, properly so called, but a dull and sullen glow without reflection, as if all its rays were polarized. Just before sinking within

the turgid sea, its central fires suddenly went out, as if hurriedly extinguished by some unaccountable power. It was a dim, silver-like rim, alone, as it rushed down the unfathomable ocean.

We waited in vain for the arrival of the sixth day—that day to me has not arrived—to the Swede, never did arrive. Thenceforward we were enshrouded in pitchy darkness, so that we could not have seen an object at twenty paces from the ship. Eternal night continued to envelop us, all unrelieved by the phosphoric sea-brilliancy to which we had been accustomed in the tropics. We observed too, that, although the tempest continued to rage with unabated violence, there was no longer to be discovered the usual appearance of surf, or foam, which had hitherto attended us. All around were horror, and thick gloom, and a black sweltering desert of ebony.

Superstitious terror crept by degrees into the spirit of the old Swede, and my own soul was wrapped up in silent wonder. We neglected all care of the ship, as worse than useless, and securing ourselves, as well as possible, to the stump of the mizzen-mast, looked out bitterly into the world of ocean. We had no means of calculating time, nor could we form any guess of our situation. We were, however, well aware of having made farther

to the southward than any previous navigators, and felt great amazement at not meeting with the usual impediments of ice. In the meantime every moment threatened to be our last—every mountainous billow hurried to overwhelm us. The swell surpassed anything I had imagined possible, and that we were not instantly buried is a miracle. My companion spoke of the lightness of our cargo, and reminded me of the excellent qualities of our ship; but I could not help feeling the utter hopelessness of hope itself, and prepared myself gloomily for that death which I thought nothing could defer beyond an hour, as, with every knot of way the ship made, the swelling of the black stupendous seas became more dismally appalling. At times we gasped for breath at an elevation beyond the albatross—at times became dizzy with the velocity of our descent into some watery hell, where the air grew stagnant, and no sound disturbed the slumbers of the kraken.

We were at the bottom of one of these abysses, when a quick scream from my companion broke fearfully upon the night. "See! see!" cried he, shrieking in my ears, "Almighty God! see! see!" As he spoke, I became aware of a dull, sullen glare of red light which streamed down the sides of the vast chasm where we lay, and threw a fitful brilliancy upon our deck. Casting my eyes upwards,

I beheld a spectacle which froze the current of my blood. At a terrific height directly above us, and upon the very verge of the precipitous descent, hovered a gigantic ship, of perhaps four thousand tons. Although upreared upon the summit of a wave more than a hundred times her own altitude, her apparent size still exceeded that of any ship of the line or East Indiaman in existence. Her huge hull was of a deep dingy black, unrelieved by any of the customary carvings of a ship. A single row of brass cannon protruded from her open ports, and dashed from their polished surfaces the fires of innumerable battle-lanterns, which swung to and fro about her rigging. But what mainly inspired us with horror and astonishment, was that she bore up under a press of sail in the very teeth of that supernatural sea, and of that ungovernable hurricane. When we first discovered her, her bows were alone to be seen, as she rose slowly from the dim and horrible gulf beyond her. For a moment of intense terror she paused upon the giddy pinnacle, as if in contemplation of her own sublimity, then trembled and tottered, and—came down.

At this instant, I know not what sudden self-possession came over my spirit. Staggering as far aft as I could, I awaited fearlessly the ruin that was to overwhelm. Our own vessel was at length ceasing

from her struggles, and sinking with her head to the sea. The shock of the descending mass struck her, consequently, in that portion of her frame which was already under water, and the inevitable result was to hurl me, with irresistible violence, upon the rigging of the stranger.

As I fell, the ship hove in stays, and went about; and to the confusion ensuing I attributed my escape from the notice of the crew. With little difficulty I made my way, unperceived, to the main hatchway, which was partially open, and soon found an opportunity of secreting myself in the hold. Why I did so I can hardly tell. An indefinite sense of awe, which at first sight of the navigators of the ship had taken hold of my mind, was perhaps the principle of my concealment. I was unwilling to trust myself with a race of people who had offered, to the cursory glance I had taken, so many points of vague novelty, doubt, and apprehension. I therefore thought proper to contrive a hiding-place in the hold. This I did by removing a small portion of the shifting-boards, in such a manner as to afford me a convenient retreat between the huge timbers of the ship.

I had scarcely completed my work, when a footstep in the hold forced me to make use of it. A man passed by my place of concealment with a fee-

ble and unsteady gait. I could not see his face, but had an opportunity of observing his general appearance. There was about it an evidence of great age and infirmity. His knees tottered beneath a load of years, and his entire frame quivered under the burden. He muttered to himself, in a low broken tone, some words of a language which I could not understand, and groped in a corner among a pile of singular-looking instruments and decayed charts of navigation. His manner was a wild mixture of the peevishness of second childhood and the solemn dignity of a god. He at length went on deck, and I saw him no more.

* * * * *

A feeling, for which I have no name, has taken possession of my soul—a sensation which will admit of no analysis, to which the lessons of bygone time are inadequate, and for which I fear futurity itself will offer me no key. To a mind constituted like my own, the latter consideration is an evil. I shall never—I know that I shall never—be satisfied with regard to the nature of my conceptions. Yet it is not wonderful that these conceptions are indefinite, since they have their origin in sources so utterly novel. A new sense—a new entity is added to my soul.

* * * * *

It is long since I first trod the deck of this terrible ship, and the rays of my destiny are, I think, gathering to a focus. Incomprehensible men! Wrapped up in meditations of a kind which I cannot divine, they pass me by unnoticed. Concealment is utter folly on my part, for the people *will not* see. It was but just now that I passed directly before the eyes of the mate; it was no long while ago that I ventured into the captain's own private cabin, and took thence the materials with which I write, and have written. I shall from time to time continue this journal. It is true that I may not find an opportunity of transmitting it to the world, but I will not fail to make the endeavor. At the last moment I will enclose the MS. in a bottle, and cast it within the sea.

* * * * *

An incident has occurred which has given me new room for meditation. Are such things the operation of ungoverned chance? I had ventured upon deck and thrown myself down, without attracting any notice, among a pile of ratlin-stuff and old sails, in the bottom of the yawl. While musing upon the singularity of my fate, I unwittingly daubed with a tar-brush the edges of a neatly-folded studding-sail which lay near me on a barrel. The studding-sail is now bent upon the ship, and

the thoughtless touches of the brush are spread out into the word DISCOVERY.

I have made many observations lately upon the structure of the vessel. Although well armed, she is not, I think, a ship of war. Her rigging, build, and general equipment, all negative a supposition of this kind. What she is *not*, I can easily perceive; what she *is*, I fear it is impossible to say. I know not how it is, but in scrutinizing her strange model and singular cast of spars, her huge size and overgrown suits of canvas, her severely simple bow and antiquated stern, there will occasionally flash across my mind a sensation of familiar things, and there is always mixed up with such indistinct shadows of recollection, an unaccountable memory of old foreign chronicles and ages long ago. * * *

I have been looking at the timbers of the ship. She is built of a material to which I am a stranger. There is a peculiar character about the wood which strikes me as rendering it unfit for the purpose to which it has been applied. I mean its extreme *porousness*, considered independently of the worm-eaten condition which is a consequence of navigation in these seas, and apart from the rottenness attendant upon age. It will appear perhaps an observation somewhat over-curious, but this wood would have every characteristic of Spanish oak, if

Spanish oak were distended by any unnatural means.

In reading the above sentence, a curious apothegm of an old weather-beaten Dutch navigator comes full upon my recollection. "It is as sure," he was wont to say, when any doubt was entertained of his veracity, "as sure as there is a sea where the ship itself will grow in bulk like the living body of the seaman." * * *

About an hour ago, I made bold to thrust myself among a group of the crew. They paid me no manner of attention, and, although I stood in the very midst of them all, seemed utterly unconscious of my presence. Like the one I had first seen in the hold, they all bore about them the marks of a hoary old age. Their knees trembled with infirmity; their shoulders were bent double with decrepitude; their shriveled skins rattled in the wind; their voices were low, tremulous, and broken; their eyes glistened with the rheum of years; and their gray hairs streamed terribly in the tempest. Around them, on every part of the deck, lay scattered mathematical instruments of the most quaint and obsolete construction. * * *

I mentioned, some time ago, the bending of a studding-sail. From that period, the ship, being thrown dead off the wind, has continued her terrific

course due south, with every rag of canvas packed upon her, from her trucks to her lower studding-sail booms, and rolling every moment her top-gallant yard-arms into the most appalling hell of water which it can enter into the mind of man to imagine. I have just left the deck, where I find it impossible to maintain a footing, although the crew seem to experience little inconvenience. It appears to me a miracle of miracles that our enormous bulk is not swallowed up at once and forever. We are surely doomed to hover continually upon the brink of eternity, without taking a final plunge into the abyss. From billows a thousand times more stupendous than any I have ever seen, we glide away with the facility of the arrowy sea-gull; and the colossal waters rear their heads above us like demons of the deep, but like demons confined to simple threats, and forbidden to destroy. I am led to attribute these frequent escapes to the only natural cause which can account for such effect. I must suppose the ship to be within the influence of some strong current, or impetuous under-tow. * * *

I have seen the captain face to face, and in his own cabin—but, as I expected, he paid me no attention. Although in his appearance there is, to a casual observer, nothing which might bespeak him more or less than man, still, a feeling of irrepres-

sible reverence and awe mingled with the sensation of wonder with which I regarded him. In stature, he is nearly my own height; that is, about five feet eight inches. He is of a well-knit and compact frame of body, neither robust nor remarkably otherwise. But it is the singularity of the expression which reigns upon the face—it is the intense, the wonderful, the thrilling evidence of old age, so utter, so extreme, which excites within my spirit a sense—a sentiment ineffable. His forehead, although little wrinkled, seems to bear upon it the stamp of a myriad of years. His gray hairs are records of the past, and his grayer eyes are sybils of the future. The cabin floor was thickly strewn with strange, iron-clasped folios, and moldering instruments of science, and obsolete long-forgotten charts. His head was bowed down upon his hands, and he pored, with a fiery unquiet eye, over a paper which I took to be a commission, and which, at all events, bore the signature of a monarch. He muttered to himself—as did the first seaman whom I saw in the hold—some low peevish syllables of a foreign tongue; and although the speaker was close at my elbow, his voice seemed to reach my ears from the distance of a mile. * * *

The ship and all in it are imbued with the spirit of Eld. The crew glide to and fro like the ghosts

of buried centuries; their eyes have an eager and uneasy meaning; and when their fingers fall athwart my path in the wild glare of the battle-lanterns, I feel as I have never felt before, although I have been all my life a dealer in antiquities, and have imbibed the shadows of fallen columns at Baalbec and Tadmor, and Persepolis, until my very soul has become a ruin. * * *

When I look around me, I feel ashamed of my former apprehensions. If I trembled at the blast which has hitherto attended us, shall I not stand aghast at a warring of wind and ocean, to convey any idea of which, the words tornado and simoon are trivial and ineffective? All in the immediate vicinity of the ship, is the blackness of eternal night, and a chaos of foamless water; but, about a league on either side of us, may be seen, indistinctly and at intervals, stupendous ramparts of ice, towering away into the desolate sky, and looking like the walls of the universe. * * *

As I imagined, the ship proves to be in a current—if that appellation can properly be given to a tide which, howling and shrieking by the white ice, thunders on to the southward with a velocity like the headlong dashing of a cataract. * * *

To conceive the horror of my sensations is, I presume, utterly impossible; yet a curiosity to pene-

trate the mysteries of these awful regions, predominates even over my despair, and will reconcile me to the most hideous aspect of death. It is evident that we are hurrying onward to some exciting knowledge — some never-to-be-imparted secret, whose attainment is destruction. Perhaps this current leads us to the southern pole itself. It must be confessed that a supposition apparently so wild has every probability in its favor. * * *

The crew pace the deck with unquiet and tremulous step; but there is upon their countenances an expression more of the eagerness of hope than of the apathy of despair.

In the meantime the wind is still in our poop, and, as we carry a crowd of canvas, the ship is at times lifted bodily from out the sea! Oh, horror upon horror!—the ice opens suddenly to the right, and to the left, and we are whirling dizzily, in immense concentric circles, round and round the borders of a gigantic amphitheatre, the summit of whose walls is lost in the darkness and the distance. But little time will be left me to ponder upon my destiny! The circles rapidly grow small—we are plunging madly within the grasp of the whirlpool—and amid a roaring, and bellowing, and thundering of ocean and of tempest, the ship is quivering—O God! and—going down!



THE MIRACLE OF THE WHITE WOLF

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

I. THE TALE OF SNORRI GAMLASON

IN the early summer of 1358, with the breaking up of the ice, there came to Brattahlid, in Greenland, a merchant-ship from Norway, with provisions for the Christian settlements on the coast. The master's name was Snorri Gamlason, and it happened that as he sailed into Eric's Fiord and warped alongside the quay, word was brought to him that the Bishop of Gardar had arrived that day in Brattahlid, to hold a confirmation. Whereupon this Snorri went ashore at once, and, getting audi-

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ence of the Bishop, gave him a little book, with an account of how he had come by it.

The book was written in Danish, and Snorri could not understand a word of it, being indeed unable to read or to write; but he told this tale:

His ship, about three weeks before, had run into a calm, which lasted for three days and two nights, and with a northerly drift she fell away, little by little, toward a range of icebergs which stretched across and ahead of them in a solid chain. But about noon of the third day the color of the sky warned him of a worse peril, and soon there came up from the westward a bank of fog, with snow in it, and a wind that increased until they began to hear the ice grinding and breaking up—as it seemed—all around them. Snorri steered at first for the southward, where had been open water; but by and by found that even here were drifting bergs. He therefore put his helm down and felt his way through the weather by short boards, and so, with the most of his men stationed forward to keep a lookout, fenced, as it were, with the danger, steering and tacking, until by God's grace the fog lifted, and the wind blew gently once more.

And now in the clear sunshine he saw that the storm had been more violent than any had supposed; since the wall of ice, which before had been

solid, was now burst and riven in many places, and in particular to the eastward, where a broad path of water lay before them almost like a canal, but winding here and there. Toward this Snorri steered and entered it with a fair breeze.

They had come, he said, but to the second bend of this waterway, when a seaman, who had climbed the mast on the chance of spying an outlet, called out in surprise that there was a ship ahead of them, but two miles off, and running down the channel before the wind, even as they. At first he found no credit for this tale, and even when those on deck spied her mast and yard overtopping a gap between two bergs, they could only set it down for a mirage or cheat of eyesight in the clear weather.

But by and by, said Snorri, they could not doubt they were in chase of a ship, and, further, that they were fast overtaking her. For she steered with no method, and shook with every slant of wind, and anon went off before it like a helpless thing, until in the end she was fetched up by the jutting foot of a berg, and there shook her sail, flapping with such noise that Snorri's men heard it, though yet a mile away.

They bore down upon her, and now took note that this sail of hers was ragged and frozen, so that it flapped like a jointed board, and that her rigging

hung in all ways and untended, but stiff with rime; and drawing yet nearer, they saw an ice-line about her hull, so deep that her timbers seemed bitten through, and a great pile of frozen snow upon her poop, banked even above her tiller; but no helmsman, and no living soul upon her.

Then Snorri let lower his boat, and was rowed toward her; and, coming alongside, gave a hail, which was unanswered. But from the frozen pile by the tiller there stuck out a man's arm, ghastly to see. Snorri climbed on board by the waist, where her sides were low and a well reached aft from the mast to the poop. There was a cabin beneath the poop, and another and larger room under the deck forward, between the step of the mast and the bows. Into each of these he broke with axes and bars, and in the one found nothing but some cooking-pots and bedding; but in the other—that is, the after-cabin—the door, as he burst it in, almost fell against a young man seated by a bed. So life-like was he that Snorri called aloud in the doorway, but anon, peering into the gloomy place, perceived the body to be frozen upright and stiff, and that on the bed lay another body, of a lady slight and young, and very fair. She, too, was dead and frozen; yet her cheeks, albeit white as the pillow against which they rested, had not lost their roundness. Snorri took

note also of her dress and of the coverlet reaching from the bed's foot to her waist, that they were of silk for the most part, and richly embroidered, and her shift and the bed-sheets about her of fine linen. The man's dress was poor and coarse by comparison; yet he carried a sword, and was plainly of gentle nurture. The sword Snorri drew from its sheath and brought away; also he took a small box of jewels; but little else could he find on the ship, and no food of any kind.

His design was to leave the ship as he found it, carrying away only these tokens that his story, when he arrived at Brattahlid, might be received with faith; and to direct where the ship might be sought for. But as he quitted the cabin some of his men shouted from the deck, where they had discovered yet another body frozen in a drift. This was an old man seated with crossed legs and leaning against the mast, having an ink-horn slung about his neck, and almost hidden by his gray beard, and on his knee a book, which he held with a thumb frozen between two pages.

This was the book which Snorri had brought to Brattahlid, and which the Bishop of Garda read aloud to him that same afternoon, translating as he went; the ink being fresh, the writing clerkly; and scarcely a page damaged by the weather. It bore

no title; but the Bishop, who afterward caused his secretary to take a copy of the tale, gave it a very long one, beginning: "God's mercy shown in a miracle upon certain castaways from Jutland, at the Feast of the Nativity of His Blessed Son, our Lord, in the year MCCCLVII, whereby He made dead trees to put forth in leaf, and comforted desperate men with summer in the midst of the Frozen Sea" . . . with much beside. But all this appears in the tale, which I will head only with the name of the writer.

II. PETER KURT'S MANUSCRIPT

Now that our troubles are over, and I sit by the mast of our late unhappy ship, not knowing if I am on earth or in paradise, but full-fed and warm in all my limbs, yea pierced and glowing with the love of Almighty God, I am resolved to take pen and use my unfrozen ink in telling out of what misery His hand hath led us to this present Eden.

I who write this am Peter Kurt, and I was the steward of my master Ebbe while he dwelt in his own castle of Nebbegaard. Poor he was then, and poor, I suppose, he is still in all but love and the favor of God; but in those days the love was but an old servant's (to wit, my own), and the favor of

God not evident, but the poverty, on the other hand, bitterly apparent in all our housekeeping.

We lived alone, with a handful of servants—sometimes as few as three—in the castle which stands between the sandhills and the woods, as you sail into Veile Fiord. All these woods, as far away as to Rosenvold, had been the good knight his father's, but were lost to us before Ebbe's birth, and leased on pledge to the Knight Borre, of Egeskov, of whom I am to tell; and with them went all the crew of verderers, huntsmen, grooms, prickers, and ostringers that had kept Nebbegaard cheerful the year round. His mother had died at my master's birth, and the knight himself but two years after, so that the lad grew up in his poverty with no heritage but a few barren acres of sand, a tumbling house, and his father's sword, and small prospect of winning the broad lands out of Borre's clutches.

Nevertheless, under my tutoring he grew into a tall lad and a bold, a good swordsman, skilful at the tilt and in handling a boat; but not talkative or free in his address of strangers. The most of his days he spent in fishing, or in the making and mending of gear; and his evenings, after our lesson in sword-play, in the reading of books (of which Nebbegaard had good store), and especially of the Icelanders, skalds and sagamen; also at times in the study of

Latin with me, who had been bred to the priesthood, but left it for love of his father, my foster-brother, and now had no ambition of my own but to serve this lad and make him as good a man.

But there were days when he would have naught to do with fishing or with books; dark days when I forbore and left him to mope by the dunes, or in the great garden which had been his mother's, but was now a wilderness untended. And it was then that he first met with the lady Mette.

For as he walked there one morning, a little before noon, a swift shadow passed overhead between him and the sun, and almost before he could glance upward a body came dropping out of the sky and fell with a thud among the rose-bushes by the eastern wall. It was a heron, and after it swooped the bird which had murdered it; a white ger-falcon of the kind which breeds in Greenland, but a trained bird, as he knew by the sound of the bells on her legs as she plunged through the bushes. Ebbe ran at once to the corner where the birds struggled; but as he picked up the pelt he happened to glance toward the western wall, and in the gateway there stood a maiden with her hand on the bridle of a white palfrey. Her dog came running toward Ebbe as he stood. He beat it off, and carrying the pelt across to its mistress, waited a moment si-

lently, cap in hand, while she called the great falcon back to its lure and leashed it to her wrist, which seemed all too slight for the weight.

Then, as Ebbe held out the dead heron, she shook her head and laughed. "I am not sure, sir, that I have any right to it. We flushed it yonder between the wood and the sandhills, and, though I did not stay to consider, I think it must belong to the owner of the shore-land."

"It is true," said Ebbe, "that I own the shore-land, and the forest, too, if law could enforce right. But for the bird you are welcome to it, and to as many more as you care to kill."

Upon this she knit her brows. "The forest? But I thought that the forest was my father's? My name," said she, "is Mette, and my father is the Knight Borre, of Egeskov."

"I am Ebbe of Nebbegaard, and," said he, perceiving the mirth in her eyes, "you have heard the rhyme upon me:

" ' Ebbe from Nebbe, with all his men good,
Has neither food nor firing-wood.' "

"I had not meant to be discourteous," said she, contritely; "but tell me more of these forest-lands."

"Nay," answered Ebbe, "hither comes riding your father with his men. Ask him for the story,

and when he has told it you may know why I cannot make him or his daughter welcome at Nebbegaard."

To this she made no reply, but with her hand on the palfrey's bridle went slowly back to meet her father, who reined up at a little distance and waited, offering Ebbe no salutation. Then a groom helped her to the saddle, and the company rode away toward Egeskov, leaving the lad with the dead bird in his hand.

For weeks after this meeting he moped more than usual. He had known before that Sir Borre would leave no son, and that the lands of Nebbegaard, if ever to be won back, must be wrested from a woman—and this had ever troubled him. It troubled me the less because I hoped there might be another way than force; and even if it should come to that, Sir Borre's past treachery had killed in me all kindness toward his house, male or female.

He and my old master and five other knights of the eastern coast had been heavily oppressed by the Lord of Trelde, Lars Trolle, who owned many ships, and, though no better than a pirate, claimed a right of levying tribute along the shore that faces Fünen, upon pretence of protecting it. After enduring many raids and paying toll under threat for years, these seven knights banded together to

rid themselves of this robber; but word of their meetings being carried to Trolle, he came secretly one night to Nebbegaard with three ships' crews, broke down the doors, and finding the seven assembled in debate, made them prisoners and held them at ransom. My master, a poor man, could only purchase release by the help of his comrade, Borre, who found the ransom, but took in exchange the lands of Nebbegaard, to hold them until repaid out of their revenues; but of these he could never after be brought to give an account. We on our part had lost the power to enforce it, and behind his own strength he could now threaten us with Lars Trolle's, to whom he had been reconciled.

Therefore I felt no tenderness for Sir Borre's house, if by any means our estates could be recovered. But after this meeting with Sir Borre's daughter, I could see that my young lord went heavily troubled; and I began to think of other means than force.

It may have been six months later that word came to us of great stir and bustle at Egeskov. Sir Borre, being aged, and anxious to see his daughter married before he died, had proclaimed a Bride-show. Now the custom is, and the rule, that any suitor (so he be of gentle birth) may offer himself in these contests; nor will the parents

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begin to bargain until he has approved himself—a wise plan, since it lessens the disputing, which else might be endless. So when this news reached us I looked at my master, and he, perceiving what I would say, answered it.

“If Holgar will carry me,” said he, “we will ride to Egeskov.”

This Holgar was a stout roan horse, foaled at Nebbegaard, but now well advanced in years, and the last of that red stock for which our stables had been famous.

“He will carry you thither,” said I; “and by God’s grace, bring you home with a bride behind you.”

Upon this my master hung his head. “Peter,” he said, “do not think I attempt this because it is the easier way.”

“It comes easier than fighting with a woman,” I answered. “But you will find it hard enough when the old man begins to haggle.”

I did not know then that the lad’s heart was honestly given to this maid; but so it was, and had been from the moment when she stood before him in the gateway.

So to Egeskov we rode, and there found no less than forty suitors assembled, and some with a hundred servants in retinue. Sir Borre received us

with no care to hide his scorn, though the hour had not come for putting it into words; and truly my master's arms were old-fashioned, and with the dents they had honorably taken when they cased his father, made a poor, battered show, for all my scouring.

Nevertheless, I had no fear when his turn came to ride the ring. Three rides had each wooer under the lady Mette's eyes, and three rings Ebbe carried off and laid on the cushion before her. She stooped and passed about his neck the gold chain, which she held for the prize; but I think they exchanged no looks. Only one other rider brought two rings, and this was a son of Lars Trolle, Olaf by name, a tall young knight, and well-favored, but disdainful; whom I knew Sir Borre must favor if he could.

I could not see that the maiden favored him above the rest, yet I kept a close eye upon this youth, and must own that in the jousting which followed he carried himself well. For this the most of the wooers had fresh horses, and I drew a long breath when, at the close of the third course, my master, with two others, remained in the lists. For it had been announced to us that the last courses should be ridden on the morrow. But now Sir Borre behaved very treacherously, for perceiving

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(as I am sure) that the horse Holgar was over-wearied and panting, he gave word that the sport should not be stayed. More by grace of Heaven it was than by force of riding that Ebbe unhorsed his next man, a knight's son from Smalling; but in the last course, which he rode against Olaf of Trolle, who had stood a bye, his good honest beast came to the tilt-cloth with knees trembling, and at a touch rolled over, though between the two lances (I will swear) there was nothing to choose. I was quick to pick up my dear lad; but he would have none of my comfort, and limped away from the lists as one who had borne himself shamefully. Yea, and my own heart was hot as I led Holgar back to stable, without waiting to see the prize claimed by one who, though a fair fighter, had not won it without foul aid.

Having stalled Holgar I had much ado to find his master again, and endless work to persuade him to quit his sulks and join the other suitors in the hall that night, when each presented his bride-gift. Even when I had won him over, he refused to take the coffer I placed in his hands, though it held his mother's jewels, few but precious. But entering with the last, as became his humble rank of esquire, he laid nothing at the lady's feet save his sword and the chain that she herself had given him.

“You bring little, Squire Ebbe,” said the Knight Borre, from his seat beside his daughter.

“I bring what is most precious in the world to me,” said Ebbe.

“Your lance is broken, I believe?” said the old knight scornfully.

“My lance is not broken,” he answered; “else you should have it to match your word.” And rising, without a look at Mette, whose eyes were downcast, he strode back to the door.

I had now given up hope, for the maid showed no sign of kindness, and the old man and the youth were like two dogs—the very sight of the one set the other growling. Yet—since to leave in a huff would have been discourteous—I prevailed on my master to bide over the morrow, and even to mount Holgar and ride forth to the hunt which was to close the Bride-show. He mounted, indeed, but kept apart and well behind Mette and her brisk group of wooers. For, apart from his lack of inclination, his horse was not yet recovered; and by and by, as the prickers started a deer, the hunt swept ahead of him and left him riding alone.

He had a mind to turn aside and ride straight back to Nebbegaard, whither he had sent me on to announce him (and dismally enough I obeyed),

when at the end of a green glade he spied Mette returning alone on her white palfrey.

“For I am tired of this hunting,” she told him, as she came near. “And you? Does it weary you also, that you lag so far behind?”

“It would never weary me,” he answered; “but I have a weary horse.”

“Then let us exchange,” said she. “Though mine is but a palfrey, it would carry you better. Your roan betrayed you yesterday, and it is better to borrow than to miss excelling.”

“My house,” answered Ebbe, still sulkily, “has had enough of borrowing of Egeskov; and my horse may be valueless, but he is one of the few things dear to me, and I must keep him.”

“Truly then,” said she, “your words were nought, last night, when you professed to offer me the gifts most precious to you in the world.”

And before he could reply to this, she had pricked on and was lost in the woodland.

Ebbe sat for a while as she left him, considering, at the crossing of two glades. Then he twitched Holgar’s rein and turned back toward Nebbegaard. But at the edge of the wood, spying a shepherd seated below in the plain by his flock, he rode down to the man, and called to him and said:

“Go this evening to Egeskov and greet the lady

Mette, and say to her that Ebbe of Nebbegaard could not barter his good horse, the last of his father's stable. But that she may know he was honest in offering her the thing most precious to him, tell her further what thou hast seen."

So saying, he alighted off Holgar, and, smoothing his neck, whispered a word in his ear. And the old horse turned his muzzle and rubbed it against his master's left palm, whose right gripped a dagger and drove it straight for the heart. This was the end of the roan stock of Nebbegaard.

My master Ebbe reached home that night with the mire thick on his boots. Having fed him, I went to the stables, and finding no Holgar made sure that he had killed the poor beast in wrath for his discomfiture at the tilt. The true reason he gave me many days after. I misjudged him, judging him by his father's temper.

On the morrow of the Bride-show the suitors took their leave of Egeskov, under promise to return again at the month's end and hear how the lady Mette had chosen. So they went their ways, none doubting that the fortunate one would be Olaf of Trelde; and, for me, I blamed myself that we had ever gone to Egeskov.

But on the third morning after the Bride-show I changed this advice very suddenly; for going at

six of the morning to unlock our postern gate, as my custom was, I found a tall black stallion tethered there and left without a keeper. His harness was of red leather, and each broad crimson rein bore certain words embroidered: on the one "A Straight Quarrel is Soonest Mended"; on the other, "Who Will Dare Learns Swiftmess."

Little time I lost in calling my master to admire, and having read what was written, he looked in my eyes and said, "I go back to Egeskov."

"That is well done," said I; "may the Almighty God prosper it!"

"But," said he doubtfully, "if I determine on a strange thing, will you help me, Peter? I may need a dozen men; men without wives to miss them."

"I can yet find a dozen such along the fiord," I answered.

"And we go on a long journey, perhaps never to return to Nebbegaard."

"Dear master," said I, "what matter where my old bones lie after they have done serving you?" He kissed me and rode away to Egeskov.

"I thought that the Squire of Nebbe had done with us," Sir Borre began to sneer, when Ebbe found audience. "But the Bride-show is over, my man, and I give not my answer for a month yet."

“Your word is long to pledge, and longer to redeem,” said Ebbe. “I know that, were I to wait a twelvemonth, you would not of free will give me Mette.”

“Ah, you know that, do you? Well, then, you are right, Master Lackland, and the greater your impudence in hoping to wile from me through my daughter what you could not take by force.”

Ebbe replied, “I was prepared to find it difficult, but let that pass. As touching my lack of land, I have Nebbegaard left; a poor estate and barren, yet I think you would be glad of it, to add to the lands of which you robbed us.”

“Well,” said Borre, “I would give a certain price for it, but not my daughter, nor anything near so precious to me.”

“Give me one long ship,” said Ebbe; “the swiftest of your seven which ride in the strait between Egeskov and Stryb. You shall take Nebbegaard for her, since I am weary of living at home and care little to live at all without Mette.”

Borre’s eyes shone with greed. “I commend you,” said he; “for a stout lad there is nothing like risking his life to win a fortune. Give me the deeds belonging to Nebbegaard, and you shall have my ship *Gold Mary*.”

"By your leave," said Ebbe, "I have spent some time in watching your ships upon the fiord; and the ship in my mind was the *White Wolf*."

Sir Borre laughed to find himself outwitted, for the *White Wolf* could outsail all his fleet. But in any case he had the better of the bargain and could afford to show some good-humor. Moreover, though he knew not that Mette had any tenderness for this youth, his spirits rose at the prospect of getting him out of the way.

So the bargain was struck, and as Nebbe rode homewards to his castle for the last time, he met the shepherd who had taken his former message. The man was waiting for him, and (as you guess) by Mette's orders.

"Tell the lady Mette," said Ebbe, "that I have sold Nebbegaard for the *White Wolf*, and that two nights from now my men will be aboard of her; also that I sup with her father that evening before the boat takes me off from the Bent Ness."

So it was that two nights later Ebbe supped at Egeskov, and was kept drinking by the old knight for an hour maybe after the lady Mette had risen and left the hall for her own room.

And at the end, after the last speeding-cup, needs must Sir Borre (who had grown friendly beyond all belief) see him to the gate and stand there bare-

headed among his torch-bearers while my master mounted the black stallion that was to bear him to Bent Ness, three miles away, where I waited with the boat.

But as Ebbe shook his rein, and moved out of the torchlight, came the damsel Mette stealing out of the shadow upon the far side of the horse. He reached down a hand, and she took it, and sprang up behind him.

“For this bout, Sir Borre, I came with a fresh horse!” called my master blithely; and so, striking spur, galloped off into the dark.

Little chance had Sir Borre to overtake them. The stallion was swift, our boat waiting in the lee of the Ness, the wind southerly and fresh, the *White Wolf* ready for sea, with sail hoisted and but one small anchor to get on board or cut away if need were. But there was no need. Before the men of Egeskov reached the Ness and found there the black stallion roaming, its riders were sailing out of the strait with a merry breeze. So began our voyage.

My master was minded to sail for Norway and take service under the king. But first, coming to the island of Laesö, he must put ashore and seek a priest by whom he and the lady Mette were safely made man and wife. Two days he spent at the is-

land, and then, with fresh store of provisions, we headed northward again.

It was past Skagen that our troubles began, with a furious wind from the northeast against which there was no contending, so that we ran from it and were driven for two days and a night into the wide sea. Even when it lessened, the wind held in the east; and we, who could handle the ship, but knew little of reckoning, crept northward again in the hope to sight the coast of Norway. For two days we held on at this, lying close by the wind, and in good spirits, although our progress was not much; but on the third blew another gale—this time from the southeast—and for a week gale followed gale, and we went in deadly peril, yet never losing hope. The worst was the darkness, for the year was now drawing toward Yule, and as we pressed farther north we lost almost all sight of the sun.

At length, with the darkness and the bitter cold and our stores running low, we resolved to let the wind take us with what swiftness it might to whatsoever land it listed; and so ran westward, with darkness closing upon us, and famine and a great despair.

But the lady Mette did not lose heart, and the worst of all (our failing cupboard) we kept from

her, so that she never lacked for plenty. Truly her cheerfulness paid us back, and her love for my master, the like of which I had not seen in this world; no, nor dreamed of. Hand in hand this pair would sit, watching the ice which was our prison and the great North Lights, she close against Ebbe's side for warmth, and (I believe) as happy as a bird; he trembling for the end. The worst was to see her at table pressing food to his mouth and wondering at his little hunger; while his whole body cried out for the meat, only it could not be spared.

Though she must know soon, none of us had the heart to tell her; and not out of pity alone, but because with her must die out the last spark by which we warmed ourselves.

But there came a morning—I write it as of a time long ago, and yet it was but yesterday, praise be unto God!—there came a morning when I awoke and found that two of our men had died in the night, of frost and famine. They must be hidden before my mistress discovered aught; and so before her hour of waking we weighted and dropped the bodies overside into deep water; for the ice had not yet wholly closed about us. Now as I stooped, I suppose that my legs gave way beneath me. At any rate, I fell; and in falling struck my head against the bulwarks, and opened my eyes

in that unending dusk to find the lady Mette stooping over me.

Then somehow I was aware that she had called for wine to force down my throat, and had been told that there was no wine; and also that with this answer had come to her the knowledge, full and sudden, of our case. Better had we done to trust her than to hide it all this while, for she turned to Ebbe, who stood at her shoulder, and "Is not this the feast of Yule?" she asked. My master bent his head, but without answering.

"Ah!" she cried to him. "Now I know what I have longed to know, that your love is less than mine, for you can love yet be doubtful of miracles; while to me, now that I have loved, no miracle can be aught but small." She bowed herself over me. "Art dying, old friend? Look up and learn that God, being Love, deserts not lovers."

Then she stooped and gathered, as I thought, a handful of snow from the deck; but lo! when she pressed it to my lips, and I tasted, it was heavenly manna.

And looking up past her face I saw the ribbons of the North Lights fade in a great and wide sunlight, bathing the deck and my frozen limbs. Nor did they feel it only, but on the wind came the noise of bergs rending, springs breaking, birds singing,

many and curious. And with that, as I am a sinful man, I gazed up into green leaves; for either we had sailed into Paradise or the timbers of the *White Wolf* were swelling with sap and pushing forth bough upon bough. Yea, and there were roses at the mast's foot, and my fingers, as I stretched them, dabbled in mosses. While I lay there, breathing softly, as one who dreams and fears to awake, I heard her voice talking among the noises of birds and brooks, and by the scent it seemed to be in a garden; but whether it spake to me or to Ebbe I knew not, nor cared. "The Lord is my Shepherd, and guides me," it said, "wherefore I lack nothing. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me by comfortable streams: He reviveth my soul. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no harm: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." But, a little after, I knew that the voice spake to my master, for it said: "Let us go forth into the field, O beloved: let us lodge in the villages: let us get up betimes to the vineyard and see if the vine have budded, if its blossom be open, the pomegranates in flower. Even there will I give thee my love." Then looking again I saw that the two had gone from me and left me alone.

But, blessed be God, they took not away the

vision, and now I know certainly that it is no cheat. For here sit I, dipping my pen into the unfrozen ink, and, when a word will not come, looking up into the broad branches and listening to the birds till I forget my story. It is long since they left me; but I am full fed, and the ship floats pleasantly. After so much misery I am as one rocked on the bosom of God; and the pine resin has a pleasant smell.

THE BOWMEN

ARTHUR MACHEN

IT was during the retreat of the Eighty Thousand, and the authority of the censorship is sufficient excuse for not being more explicit. But it was on the most awful day of that awful time, on the day when ruin and disaster came so near that their shadow fell over London far away; and, without any certain news, the hearts of men failed within them and grew faint; as if the agony of the army in the battlefield had entered into their souls.

On this dreadful day, then, when three hundred thousand men in arms with all their artillery swelled like a flood against the little English company, there was one point above all other points in our battle line that was for a time in awful danger, not merely of defeat, but of utter annihilation. With the permission of the censorship and of the military expert, this corner may, perhaps, be described as a salient, and if this angle were crushed and broken, then the English force as a whole would be shattered, the Allied left would be turned, and Sedan would inevitably follow.

All the morning the German guns had thundered and shrieked against this corner, and against the thousand or so of men who held it. The men

joked at the shells, and found funny names for them, and had bets about them, and greeted them with scraps of music-hall songs. But the shells came on and burst, and tore good Englishmen limb from limb, and tore brother from brother, and as the heat of the day increased so did the fury of that terrific cannonade. There was no help, it seemed. The English artillery was good, but there was not nearly enough of it; it was being steadily battered into scrap iron.

There comes a moment in a storm at sea when people say to one another, "It is at its worst; it can blow no harder," and then there is a blast ten times more fierce than any before it. So it was in these British trenches.

There were no stouter hearts in the whole world than the hearts of these men; but even they were appalled as this seven-times-heated hell of the German cannonade fell upon them and overwhelmed them and destroyed them. And at this very moment they saw from their trenches that a tremendous host was moving against their lines. Five hundred of the thousand remained, and as far as they could see the German infantry was pressing on against them, column upon column, a gray world of men, ten thousand of them, as it appeared afterward.

There was no hope at all. They shook hands, some of them. One man improvised a new version of the battle-song, "Good-bye, good-bye to Tipperary," ending with "And we shan't get there." And they all went on firing steadily. The officers pointed out that such an opportunity for high-class fancy shooting might never occur again; the Germans dropped line after line; the Tipperary humorist asked, "What price Sidney Street?" And the few machine-guns did their best. But everybody knew it was of no use. The dead gray bodies lay in companies and battalions, as others came on and on and on, and they swarmed and stirred and advanced from beyond and beyond.

"World without end. Amen," said one of the British soldiers with some irrelevance as he took aim and fired. And then he remembered—he says he cannot think why or wherefore—a queer vegetarian restaurant in London where he had once or twice eaten eccentric dishes of cutlets made of lentils and nuts that pretended to be steak. On all the plates in this restaurant there was printed a figure of St. George in blue, with the motto, *Adsit Anglis Sanctus Georgius*—May St. George be a present help to the English. This soldier happened to know Latin and other useless things, and now, as he fired at his man in the gray advancing mass

—three hundred yards away—he uttered the pious vegetarian motto. He went on firing to the end, and at last Bill on his right had to clout him cheerfully over the head to make him stop, pointing out as he did so that the King's ammunition cost money and was not lightly to be wasted in drilling funny patterns into dead Germans.

For as the Latin scholar uttered his invocation he felt something between a shudder and an electric shock pass through his body. The roar of the battle died down in his ears to a gentle murmur; instead of it, he says, he heard a great voice and a shout louder than a thunder-peal crying, "Array, array, array!"

His heart grew hot as a burning coal, it grew cold as ice within him, as it seemed to him that a tumult of voices answered to his summons. He heard, or seemed to hear, thousands shouting: "St. George! St. George!"

"Ha! messire; ha! sweet Saint, grant us good deliverance!"

"St. George for merry England!"

"Harow! Harow! Monseigneur St. George, succor us."

"Ha! St. George! Ha! St. George! a long bow and a strong bow."

"Heaven's Knight, aid us!"

And as the soldier heard these voices he saw before him, beyond the trench, a long line of shapes, with a shining about them. They were like men who drew the bow, and with another shout, their cloud of arrows flew singing and tingling through the air toward the German hosts.

* * * * *

The other men in the trench were firing all the while. They had no hope; but they aimed just as if they had been shooting at Bisley.

Suddenly one of them lifted up his voice in the plainest English.

"Gawd help us!" he bellowed to the man next to him, "but we're blooming marvels! Look at those gray gentlemen, look at them! D'ye see them? They're not going down in dozens nor in 'undreds; it's thousands, it is. Look! look! there's a regiment gone while I'm talking to ye."

"Shut it!" the other soldier bellowed, taking aim, "what are ye gassing about?"

But he gulped with astonishment even as he spoke, for, indeed, the gray men were falling by the thousands. The English could hear the guttural scream of the German officers, the crackle of their revolvers as they shot the reluctant; and still line after line crashed to the earth.

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All the while the Latin-bred soldier heard the cry:

“Harow! Harow! Monseigneur, dear saint, quick to our aid! St. George help us!”

“High Chevalier, defend us!”

The singing arrows fled so swift and thick that they darkened the air; the heathen horde melted from before them.

* * * * *

“More machine-guns!” Bill yelled to Tom.

“Don’t hear them,” Tom yelled back. “But, thank God, anyway; they’ve got it in the neck.”

In fact, there were ten thousand dead German soldiers left before that salient of the English army, and consequently there was no Sedan. In Germany, a country ruled by scientific principles, the Great General Staff decided that the contemptible English must have employed shells containing an unknown gas of a poisonous nature, as no wounds were discernible on the bodies of the dead German soldiers. But the man who knew what nuts tasted like when they called themselves steak knew also that St. George had brought his Agincourt Bowmen to help the English.

THE END

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